

## Rome, Italy

### Overview

#### Introduction

Rome seems to have its own gravitational pull, attracting not only millions of tourists each year, but also the most creative artists and thinkers of every era. All that surrounds a visitor in Rome—the stunning art and architecture, the terrible traffic, the grandeur of scale and the lively (almost hyper-animated) citizens—guarantees an unforgettable trip.



Known as "The Eternal City," Rome is a supreme palimpsest. The ruins of pagan temples have become the foundations of Christian churches, ancient theaters have been made into medieval family fortresses, and Corinthian columns support new walls. The ages are layered, one atop the other, but the flow of Roman life is ever forward, with a respect for its glorious past.

Rome wasn't built in a day, so don't expect to see it in one. The historic center alone could absorb a week: the Michelangelo-designed Campidoglio, the Pantheon, the Palatine Hill and the Roman Forum, as well as the nearby Colosseum and Baths of Caracalla. The basilicas take a little longer because they are spread throughout the city.

If it's Rome's views you're after, climb up into the dome of St. Peter's or admire the panorama from the top of the Spanish Steps (better yet, from the Pincio Gardens above it) at sunset. Or survey the Forum at night from the Capitoline. Bustling, beautiful Rome, sprawling among its seven hills, is fascinating for both its ancient and its modern wonders.

Of course, not everyone immediately loves Rome: Some dislike the city's untidiness and seeming disorganization. But give *la citta eterna* a chance to charm, or else risk missing something magnificent.

#### Highlights

**Sights**—The ancient Forums, Palatine Hill, Foro di Traiano, Piazza del Campidoglio and Colosseo (the Colosseum); Basilica di San Pietro; the fountains of Piazza Navona; the Spanish Steps; The Pantheon; Trevi Fountain; Circo Massimo; the catacombs and monuments along the ancient Appian Way; Piazza del Popolo and the Pincio Gardens above it; Castel Sant'Angelo.

**Museums**—The Musei Vaticani and the Sistine Chapel; sculptures, frescoes and the Tabularium of the Musei Capitolini; phenomenal art at the Museo e Galleria Borghese; the privately owned Galleria Doria Pamphili; the unique paintings in Palazzo Barberini; the modern works at the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea; the Etruscan treasures at the Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giulia; history's layers at the Museo Nazionale Romano—Crypta Balbi.

**Memorable Meals**—Linguine with lobster sauce followed by baked turbot at Ristorante da Vincenzo; sliced, aged beef with fresh basil and Parmesan cheese at Da Tullio; brusque service and celebrities in the spartan Pizzeria Panattoni "Ai Marmi"; nouvelle cuisine at L'Antico Arco, atop the Gianicolo Hill;

wandering the ancient streets with slices from any *pizzeria al taglio* (takeaway); a picnic from the gourmet deli Volpetti.

**Late Night**—Fine jazz at Alexanderplatz; kitsch at Jonathan's Angels; a quiet drink at the swanky Caffè della Pace; dancing at Zoobar or other Testaccio hot spots; late-night vistas from atop the Gianicolo Hill, at the electric Piazza Navona or while walking from Piazza Venezia to the Colosseum.

**Walks**—A leisurely walk from the top of the Spanish Steps to the Pincio Gardens at dusk; a daytime walk through the outdoor market at Campo dei Fiori; an excursion from the Trevi Fountain to the Pantheon before or after dinner; a nighttime trek to view the Colosseum and the ruins of the Forums beautifully illuminated; a midnight adventure through the medieval streets of Trastevere; a stroll in the picturesque open spaces of Villa Borghese and Villa Pamphili.

## Geography

For urban planners and traffic managers, Rome is a headache. Streets originally designed for horses now have to accommodate SUVs. Fortunately, visitors need only focus on navigating the city, not solving its traffic problems.

The city's historic center is the Centro Storico—it's on the left bank (east side) of the Tiber River (called the Tevere in Italian), and home to the original seven hills. The ancient political, spiritual and commercial heart of this area is the Campidoglio (Capitoline Hill) and the adjacent Foro Romano (Roman Forum). Nearby are the most important monuments of ancient Rome, including Trajan's Markets, the Imperial Forum, the Colosseum and the Arches of Constantine, Septimius Severus and Titus. To the south are Palatine Hill, Circus Maximus and, a bit farther, the Baths of Caracalla, the Appian Way and the Christian catacombs.

The city's main piazzas are also helpful for orientation. Piazza Venezia and the adjoining Piazza Campidoglio are just northwest of the Roman Forum, and Piazza Navona is still farther northwest. Piazza del Popolo is on the western edge of Villa Borghese, a large park northeast of the Centro Storico. Piazza di Spagna and the Spanish Steps are just south of Piazza del Popolo. Connecting Via del Popolo and Piazza Venezia is Via del Corso, one of the city's main streets.

On the right (west) bank of the Tiber, west of the Centro Storico, is Vatican City. To the south of the Vatican are Villa Doria Pamphili and Gianicolo (Janiculum Hill). The medieval neighborhood of Trastevere (literally, "across the Tiber") is between the Gianicolo and the river, nestled in the westward bend of the river across from Isola Tiberina, an island in the Tiber. On the east side of Tiberina is the old Jewish ghetto, which contains one of the largest synagogues in Europe, along with some of the best restaurants serving traditional Roman fare.

## History

Rome is nicknamed The Eternal City not merely for surviving almost 3,000 years, but also for retaining political, religious and artistic significance throughout that time. Legend has it that Rome was founded by Romulus in 753 BC, but archaeologists have found evidence of a much earlier Etruscan settlement. Fact and myth are difficult to untangle, but it's clear that Rome was already the major power in Latium by the time of the Republic's foundation in 509 BC. By the first century AD, Rome was dominating the Mediterranean through military conquest, cunning diplomacy and innovative political organization.

During the period of the late Republic, Julius Caesar and other generals extended the boundaries and glory of Rome, while simultaneously destroying its principles of government. The Roman Empire followed,

remaining a heavyweight power for hundreds of years. Initially, literature flourished, with great emerging writers such as Cicero, Virgil, Catullus and Ovid. As the arts bloomed, however, the political structure crumbled. Squabbles and coups—as well as increased debauchery—eventually led to the Empire's division and fall.

In the first century AD, the apostles Peter and Paul arrived in Rome to proselytize, but they were martyred, along with hundreds of other Christians. Persecutions continued, on and off, until the Emperor Constantine legalized the faith in 312. The first Christian emperor also gave the Catholic Church temporal powers, beginning the papal state, which continued until the end of the 19th century (with occasional periods of foreign occupation). Papal coffers funded the projects of Michelangelo, Raphael and Bernini, the University of Rome and much of the city's infrastructure—as well as the infamous inquisitions, beginning in the 12th century.

Benito Mussolini descended on Rome in 1922 and formed the world's first fascist government. When World War II broke out, the nation allied itself with Nazi Germany, but the Partigiani (Resistance) soon convinced most Italians to support the Allies. Rome's open-city status spared it from the destruction of bombing but did little to stop the massacres and pillaging by the Germans.

U.S. troops liberated Rome on 4 June 1944, yet the city and country were destitute. The 1950s economic boom revived both, triggering the *dolce vita* era of glamour. The capital steadily grew in cultural and political power. The city had a makeover for the Vatican's 2000 jubilee and now has a revitalized urban plan, improved infrastructure and massive restoration projects under way. Rome continues to bloom with art, architecture, culture, tourism and fine living.

## Port Information

### Location

Civitavecchia Port became Italy's most famous port in 2012 when the ill-fated Costa Concordia shipwrecked off the nearby island of Giglio shortly after departure. It is also one of the country's oldest functioning ports, established in the second century by Roman emperor Trajan. It is a major cruise ship and ferry port with daily ferry connections to the Italian islands of Sicily and Sardinia.

There are 11 quays dedicated to cruise ships and 20 piers dedicated to container ships and car ferries. Dozens of cruise ships are docked in Civitavecchia throughout the year, though there are few amenities in the city of Civitavecchia itself. There are sidewalk cafes and restaurants along the port. Free Wi-Fi is available throughout the town, as well.

Civitavecchia Port, with its Bramante terminal for cruise passengers, is 50 mi/80 km northwest of Rome and can be easily reached by urban train, taxi or private shuttle service. The train station is 2,000 ft/600 m from the Bramante cruise terminal, so local taxis generally will not make the short transfer.

A special train service called Rome Express is reserved only for cruise passengers, with direct service from the port to St. Peter's station near the Vatican. The nonstop trip takes an hour. Passengers can also reach the center of Rome on Trenitalia urban trains to Rome's Termini station. These trains stop in small towns along the way and take around 80 minutes (unless you take a fast, direct train, which takes only 40 minutes). The timetable is irregular, but there are generally two or three trains an hour. The Civitavecchia port authority has also set up a free bus shuttle service to the Civitavecchia railway station.

## Potpourri

The Kingdom of Italy was proclaimed on 17 March 1861, but it was not finally unified until 1870.

The calendar we use today is more than 2,000 years old and was started by Julius Caesar. The month of July is, in fact, named after the emperor himself.

Italy celebrates 1 May as a national holiday, akin to the U.S. Labor Day; during this time, Rome hosts numerous music concerts, and international celebrities congregate in the city.

Ferragosto on 15 August is a national holiday when almost everything in Rome is closed with the exception of tourist restaurants. The holiday was established by the Emperor Augustus in 18 BC because he needed a rest. It is derived from the Latin words *Feriae Augusti*, or "Augustus' rest." It also coincides with the Catholic Feast of the Assumption.

The games held to mark the inauguration of the Colosseum lasted for 100 days and nights, during which more than 5,000 animals were killed.

The historical center of Rome was frequently flooded by the Tiber River until retaining walls were built in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Since then, the river has flooded the city only twice, in 1937 and 2014.

Italian children have only recently started receiving gifts from Santa Claus. Until the last decade or so, Italian children primarily received presents from the Befana witch on the eve of 6 January, which is Epiphany or Twelfth Night. The tradition traces from pre-Christian times. Befana leaves a lump of coal (mostly candy shaped as coal), since no children are thought to have been good all year.

Romans have traditionally used "talking statues" to voice their opposition to corruption and abuses by tacking notes onto statues on busy streets. Although the practice has been largely abandoned, four important talking statues remain: The *Pasquino* (Piazza Pasquino), *Marforio* (Capitoline Museums), *Babuino* (Via Babuino) and *Il Facchino* (Via Lata).

Romans are among the most superstitious Italians. When Romans see a nun, they immediately touch iron to ward off bad luck; bird excrement on the shoe and hearing a cat sneeze are considered signs of good luck. In a restaurant, pouring from a bottle with your hand on the bottom, or failing to look your companion in the eye while clinking glasses together for a toast, are both said to bring bad luck.

## See & Do

### Sightseeing

Rome is a great open-air museum with a high concentration of monuments, churches and artwork, enmeshed in a modern city with a lot of fast cars, mopeds and people strolling around in very stylish shoes. Even the smallest courtyard hidden in the narrowest street may hold a tiny, wonderful detail—a decorated sidewalk or a stray column, fresco or fountain. To get the most out of your visit, you'll need to walk (but we recommend wearing comfortable shoes). Before setting off, stop by one of the information kiosks that dispense maps, brochures and advice in several languages.

Start in the historic heart of the city, called the Centro Storico. That's where you'll find the Imperial Forums, including the Roman Forum, Trajan's Column and Markets, and the Palatine Hill. Nearby are the

Arch of Constantine, the Colosseum and the Circus Maximus. Then detour a bit to visit the palaces around Piazza del Campidoglio, which contain the Capitoline Museums.

On another day, explore the area between the Forums and Piazza del Popolo: You'll pass the facades of noble palaces and churches and stroll through elegant squares. Along the way, be sure to turn off the Via del Corso to visit the Pantheon to the west and the Trevi Fountain to the east. Once you reach Piazza del Popolo, take time to enjoy the green expanse of the Pincio Gardens. The nearby Villa Borghese is home not only to umbrella pines but also to three world-class museums: Galleria Borghese, Galleria Nazionale di Arte Moderna and Museo Nazionale di Villa Giulia.

World-famous examples of Christian and pre-Christian art and architecture are contained in St. Peter's Basilica and the Vatican Museums in Vatican City. The medieval district of Trastevere, across the river from the oldest part of Rome, has one of the oldest churches in Christendom, Basilica di Santa Maria in Trastevere. But it's also a great place to stroll, dine or shop, especially at night, when the bohemian streets come alive. Back across the river, on the left bank, the Jewish Ghetto is another medieval area full of ambience. If time permits, you can also visit the Catacombs of San Sebastiano or San Callisto or, invariably, one more church.

Be forewarned: Hours of admission for museums and historic sites sometimes change without notice. To save yourself stress, call to check times or reserve a time slot for something that is important to you. Booking at the Vatican Museums can save hours in waiting time, and reservations are compulsory at the Galleria Borghese. As a rule, most churches are open in the morning, close around 12:30 pm for lunch and reopen at 3:30 pm. Keep these guidelines in mind and you'll avoid the dreaded *chiuso* (closed) sign. To enter churches, women must have their shoulders covered and men must have their knees covered.

One way to make planning easier is to use a ticket broker that specializes in booking museums and historic sites. Pierreci books visits to museums and guided tours to landmarks in the city (<http://www.coopculture.it>). Ticketone books tickets to museums and landmarks, as well (phone 892-101 Monday-Friday 8 am-9 pm, Saturday 9 am-5:30 pm, costing one euro per minute on a landline, more on a cell phone; <http://www.tosc.it>). Whether you book by phone or online, get a confirmation number for your reservation and take it with you. Be aware that you will be charged a booking fee, but it's worth it for the convenience.

The city of Rome has a wide selection of passes that offer discounts on admission to many of the most popular historic sites, museums and galleries. The Roma Pass is the most popular option: 36 euros gets you free admission to two sites (including the Colosseum, with the added benefit of getting to skip the long line), three-day public transportation passes and reduced rates at subsequent sites. A 48-hour pass costs 28 euros. Purchase passes at tourist offices, most participating museums and galleries, or online. <http://www.romapass.it>.

## Historic Sites

### Arch of Constantine

Via di San Gregorio  
Rome, Italy

On this triple triumphal arch immediately outside the Colosseum, sculptural friezes commemorate the first Christian emperor's important military victory over Maxentius in AD 312. Many of the sculptures and medallions were taken from earlier monuments. The arch stands at the west side of the Colosseum, where the piazza meets Via di San Gregorio. Excavations have uncovered parts of the early Flavian wall, which are visible from the piazza.

## Basilica di San Clemente

Via Labicana 95  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 347-774-0021

<http://www.basilicasanclemente.com>

This Irish Dominican church is a microcosm of Rome, with the many layers of Roman history visible in its structure. At street level is a 12th-century church with Renaissance and baroque additions. Below are excavations of a fourth-century basilica, atop a Roman house from Nero's era and a Mithraic temple and school from the first century BC. The church also has magnificent mosaics, frescoes and pavements. All in all, it illustrates the evolution of Christian art between the first and 19th centuries. The enclosed medieval courtyard is a quiet oasis from the roaring traffic outside.

The church is open Monday-Saturday 9 am-12:30 pm and 3-6 pm, Sunday noon-6 pm. Enter the street-level church for free, but a visit to the lower levels costs 10 euros adults.

## Basilica di San Giovanni in Laterano

Piazza San Giovanni in Laterano (east of the Colosseum)  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-6988-6433

[http://www.vatican.va/various/basiliche/san\\_giovanni/index\\_it.htm](http://www.vatican.va/various/basiliche/san_giovanni/index_it.htm)

Saint John Lateran holds the distinction of being Rome's cathedral, as well as the oldest of the city's five major basilicas. The church—said to have been founded in 313 by Emperor Constantine the Great—has, of course, been rebuilt many times over the centuries, but its fourth-century floor plan is still honored. As the Cathedral of the Bishop of Rome, the church contains the papal throne, and it ranks above all other churches—even above St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican.

Borromini is responsible for much of the interior visible today; the coffered, carved and painted ceiling and the Cosmati mosaic floors are spectacular. Outside, the octagonal baptistery dates from the fourth century. The famous Scala Sancta (sacred steps) are also at this piazza. Some, who still venerate it as the staircase from Pilate's house that Jesus ascended, climb it on their knees, praying at each step. All that remains of the 16th-century Lateran Palace, residence of the popes until 1377, is the staircase and the papal chapel, with precious 13th-century frescoes, at its top. The cloister, all that's left of the Benedictine monastery that serviced the basilica, is also open to the public.

The basilica is open daily 7 am-6:30 pm. The cloister is open 9 am-6 pm. The baptistery is open 7 am-12:30 pm and 4-7 pm. The Scala Sancta is open 6:15 am-noon and 3-6:15 pm (3:30-6:45 pm April-September). Admission is free for the basilica and the Scala Sancta (although a donation is expected for those who wish to climb the sacred stairs on their knees), 2 euros for the cloister. Call ahead to book a guided tour, available Monday-Friday 9 am-1 pm.

## Basilica di San Pietro

Piazza San Pietro (Metro stop: Ottaviano-San Pietro)  
Vatican City, Italy

**Phone:** 06-6988-3731 for the main inquiries office

[http://www.vatican.va/various/basiliche/san\\_pietro/index\\_it.htm](http://www.vatican.va/various/basiliche/san_pietro/index_it.htm)

As the spiritual center of the Catholic Church, St. Peter's is the ultimate destination for Catholic pilgrims, but it also draws visitors with its masterpieces of art and architecture. Most noticeable—at least from a

distance—is the dome, designed by Michelangelo, which is the world's second largest. An outer shell protects the gold-encrusted interior dome. Between the shell and the dome is a spiraling walkway that guests can climb to the cupola, which overlooks Rome and Vatican City. Walk the whole way or take an elevator to the terrace, which is lined with statues of Jesus, the apostles and other saints. The tight, slanting stairway that ascends from there is not for the claustrophobic, but it's definitely worth the effort.

Another Michelangelo masterpiece, the *Pieta*, lies behind bulletproof glass in the basilica. Perhaps appropriately for its subject matter, it seems quite small—just as most visitors feel in this massive structure. Also noteworthy are the tomb of Clement XIII by Canova—the sculpted lions almost roar—and a stunning mosaic by Giotto in the grottoes on the lower level.

Much of the artistic glory belongs to architect-sculptor Bernini: He designed the huge semicircular colonnades that surround the piazza in front of the basilica—they reach out like two arms to envelop visitors—and the gilt bronze baldachin, a canopy on tall pillars, which he placed over the papal altar. Don't miss his other works: the breathtaking *Throne of St. Peter in Glory*, with the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove surrounded by angels and gilded rays of light; the tabernacle made of gold, silver and lapis in the prayer room; the equestrian statue of Constantine to the right of the front portico; and the flamboyant monument to Pope Alexander VII—the skeleton as a symbol of death may be a bit much, but the marble "fabric" draped over it seems so real, you expect it to rustle.

Free English-language tours of the Basilica are offered Monday-Friday at 9:45 am and 2:15 pm. Meet in the information office to the left of the Basilica; tours cannot be reserved, so it is advisable to arrive early. Alternatively, the audioguide is very helpful (available at the information desk to the right of the portico's entrance for 5 euros).

When the pope is in residence, he blesses the crowds in Piazza San Pietro at noon on Sunday. Pope Francis has refused to live in the lavish papal apartments overlooking the square, but he still gives his weekly *angelus* blessing from the windows. He lives in the simple Casa Santa Marta on the Vatican grounds where visiting priests and nuns stay. Because of the popularity of Pope Francis, it takes more than a little planning to attend a papal audience, held Wednesday at 10:30 am in Piazza San Pietro (or in the Paul VI Audience Hall in winter). Order free tickets in writing, well in advance (fax 06-6988-5863) for reserved seating. Pick up tickets at the Bronze Door, to the right of Basilica San Pietro (either the day before 3-7 pm, or the day of 8-10:30 am). It is best to be in line two hours ahead of the audience to beat the school and tour groups. Standing-room-only access is open on a first-come, first-served basis and is rarely filled, except on special occasions such as Easter and Christmas. Contact your local Catholic priest for more information. The church remains closed during the audience.  
<http://www.papalaudience.org/tickets>.

Make a separate reservation to visit the Scavi, the excavations of a remarkably intact necropolis underneath St. Peter's. They contain a first-century street with tombs, including the possible burial place of St. Peter himself. The site lies below the basement crypt of the popes. Only a few 90-minute tours run each day, but it's worth trying to reserve a spot. Apply in person or in writing to the Ufficio Scavi at the Arco delle Campane (Arch of the Bells), to the left of the basilica. The Swiss Guards can direct visitors to the office, which is open Monday-Friday 9 am-6 pm. Requests may also be faxed to 06-6987-3017. Tickets are 13 euros (children younger than 16 are not admitted). Phone 06-6988-5318 for more information. Reservations cannot be made by phone.

The dress code for all indoor areas at the Vatican is strictly enforced: Both men and women must have their knees and shoulders covered, and men should wear long pants. Switch off mobile phones, and expect strict security controls (including metal detectors) and long lines.

The basilica is open daily 7 am-7 pm (till 6:30 pm in winter). Mass is held by visiting priests Monday-Saturday at 8:30, 10 and 11 am, and noon and 5 pm; Sunday at 9, 10:30 and 11:30 am, and 12:15, 1, 4 and 5:45 pm. Admission to the basilica is free; ascending to the dome is 6 euros by foot or 8 euros for the elevator to the terrace.

## Basilica di Santa Maria in Trastevere

Piazza Santa Maria in Trastevere  
Rome, Italy

This 12th-century church, built over a third-century basilica, is believed to be Rome's oldest dedicated Catholic Church (the first in which Mass was openly celebrated) and the first dedicated to the Virgin Mary. It has been adorned with stunning mosaics, 22 Ionic columns taken from the Terme di Caracalla, frescoes and entire chapels from several centuries. The medieval gold mosaic apse depicting the life of the Virgin is particularly impressive.

Monday-Saturday 7:30 am-9 pm (extended hours on religious holidays). The church is closed to visitors during services.

## Basilica di Santa Maria Maggiore

Via Liberiana 27 (at Piazza Santa Maria Maggiore)  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-6988-6800

[http://www.vatican.va/various/basiliche/sm\\_maggiore/index\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/various/basiliche/sm_maggiore/index_en.html)

As one of Rome's five major basilicas, this one, between Piazza della Repubblica and Basilica di San Giovanni in Laterano, deserves a look. The original structure dates from the fourth century and is still very visible, but it has had many transformations and additions, including a glorious gold coffered ceiling (made with the first gold shipped over from the New World), 13th-century mosaics and two splendid chapels: Paolina (for Pope Paul V) and Sforza (designed by Michelangelo). It also houses Gian Lorenzo Bernini's tomb, located to the right near the altar.

Daily 7 am-6:45 pm. Audioguide 5 euros.

## Castel Sant'Angelo

Lungotevere Castello 50  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-681-9111

<http://www.castelsantangelo.com>

This round fortress rises over the banks of the Tiber, a cannonball's shot from the Vatican. Emperor Hadrian built it as his mausoleum between AD 135 and 139. Later it became a papal stronghold, linked since 1277 to the Vatican by a concealed passageway (the *passetto*) in the defensive walls. Strolling around its many levels, ages and stages—both dark and glorious—is fun and informative. The site also includes an interesting museum and a lovely park, which often hosts fairs and exhibitions. The fortifications are famous as the setting for the third act of Puccini's *Tosca*, in which the heroine throws herself over the parapet.

Daily 9 am-7:30 pm. Admission fee is 10 euros. Guided tours are available upon request.



## Catacombs of San Callisto

Via Appia Antica 110-126 (take Bus 218 from Piazza San Giovanni in Laterano, a 15-minute ride, or Bus 118 from Circo Massimo)

Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-513-0151

<http://www.catacombe.roma.it>

These five floors of intricate passageways were the first official cemetery of the Roman church between the second and eighth centuries. Guided tours (about a half-hour long) include a look at early Christian frescoes and imagery (but no bones—the remains were either stolen or long since transferred to the Pantheon).

Open daily except Wednesday 9 am-noon and 2-5 pm. Closed February. 8 euros.

## Chiesa di Santa Maria in Cosmedin

Piazza della Bocca della Verita 18 (between the Circo Massimo and the Tiber)

Rome, Italy

This basilica is famous for *La Bocca della Verita* (the Mouth of Truth). Once a Roman sewer cover, this huge marble disk is now embedded in the portico wall of the church. According to tradition, the mouth will bite off a liar's hand, but it's more likely that, in medieval times, a man with a sword on the other side helped the "miracle" along. The church itself is often overlooked, but its early medieval architecture, frescoes, mosaic floors and Masonic imagery are well worth a look.

Daily 9:30 am-6 pm.

## Chiesa di Santa Maria Sopra Minerva

Piazza della Minerva 42 (near the Pantheon)

Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-6992-0384

<http://www.basilicaminerva.it>

Rome's only significant Gothic church (the facade dates from Renaissance times), this was built on top of a Roman temple to the goddess of wisdom. Inside, stunning lapis-and-gold ceiling mosaics glimmer between its intersecting Gothic arches. The interior shelters the tomb of St. Catherine of Siena and *The Risen Christ* statue by Michelangelo. Many other artistic treasures are difficult to see in the dim lighting, so take a couple of 0.50-euro coins for the timed lights (one coin buys one minute of visibility). Bernini's playful elephant sculpture, which holds up Rome's smallest obelisk, is the centerpiece of the piazza outside.

Monday-Friday 7:30 am-7 pm, Saturday and Sunday 7:30 am-12:30 pm and 3:30-7 pm.

## Chiesa di Sant'Andrea al Quirinale

Via del Quirinale 30

Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-487-4565

<http://www.santandrea.gesuiti.it>

After you've seen the splash Bernini made at St. Peter's, stop at this church to see what he could achieve on a smaller scale (Bernini considered it his only perfect work). It's an oval structure with the altar on the

long side, close to every seat. The martyred St. Andrew, who appears in the painted altarpiece and in a stucco sculpture above it, seems to look up toward the symbol of the Holy Spirit. The daylight streaming through the clerestory windows plays off the gilding, making the dome glow.

Open daily except Monday 8:30 am-noon and 2:30-6 pm, Sunday 9 am-noon and 3-6 pm (usually closed in August).

### Chiesa di Sant'Ignazio di Loyola

Via del Caravita 8-A (on Via del Seminario)  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-679-4406

<http://www.santignazio.gesuiti.it>

Jesuits commissioned this church at the height of the baroque period, but their funds were exhausted before the dome's completion. Instead, they painted the ceilings with striking trompe l'oeil, inducing centuries of neck-strain as visitors gape. Andrea Pozzo's *Triumph of St. Ignatius* is a masterpiece of light and perspective, creating a perfect two-dimensional impression of a dome.

Monday-Saturday 7:30 am-7 pm, Sunday 9 am-7 pm with the exclusion of when Masses are being held (8 am and 6 pm Monday-Saturday, and 11:30 am and 6 pm Sunday).

### Chiesa Santa Maria della Concezione de Cappuccini

Via Veneto 27  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-8880-3695

<http://www.cappucciniviaveneto.it>

Don't miss the church itself (which is technically called Santa Maria Immacolata), with its painting of St. Michael and the devil, but the big draw there is the adjoining crypts. The five rooms are filled with intricate ornamentation, mosaics and sculptures, all made with the bones of Capuchin friars who served the church over the centuries. It's a spooky but fascinating sight.

Daily 9 am-7 pm. Admission to museum and crypt is 6 euros.

### Circo Massimo

Via del Circo Massimo (between Palatine and Aventine hills)  
Rome, Italy

<http://www.turismoroma.it/cosa-fare/circo-massimo>

The Circus Maximus was built in 600 BC. One of the largest structures ever dedicated to entertainment, it could hold an audience of 385,000. The long, oval field hosted chariot races and contests between gladiators and wild beasts. Today, with the exception of some crumbling ruins at the south end, all that remains is a large park—the ancient track now trod only by joggers and courting couples—so you'll have to use your imagination and recollections of *Ben Hur* to piece it back together. It is often used for large concerts, markets, sporting events and important political protests. It is also a popular place for Romans to walk their dogs. The Palatine Hill provides an emperor's-eye view of the ruin.

## Colosseo

Piazza del Colosseo (at the southern end of Via dei Fori Imperiali)  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-3996-7700

<http://www.archeoroma.beniculturali.it/siti-archeologici/colosseo>

Originally called the Flavian Amphitheater and the site of gladiatorial combat, the Colosseum is the most frequently evoked symbol of Rome. Begun in AD 72 by Emperor Vespasian, it was finished eight years later by his son Titus and could seat 80,000 spectators. Unfortunately, various popes quarried its marble, so this majestic building is more dilapidated than it should be. Even so, its size and history are still quite breathtaking. Underground dungeons opened to visitors for the first time in October 2010, and an upper area that had been closed since the 1970s reopened. Plays, concerts and demonstrations are staged in and around the Colosseum throughout the year. A 25-million-euro donation from a businessman is being used to renovate the site; updates began in 2013 and were completed in April 2016.

Daily 8:30 am till one hour before sunset. Tours in English (45 minutes long, five tours offered daily), audioguides and guided archaeological tours are available. 8 euros guided tour, 5.50 euros audio tour. Admission 12 euros (the same ticket gains you entrance to a small museum, as well as to the nearby Palatine Hill—save time by buying the ticket there), with an additional 2 euros for preregistration (skip the long line).

## Foro di Traiano

Via IV Novembre 94 (the entrance is north of the column)  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-0608 for tickets. Audioguide 6 euros. Entrance fees may rise during temporary exhibitions. Via IV Novembre 94 (the entrance is north of the column), Rome

<http://www.mercatiditraiano.it>

Trajan's Markets, Forum and Column are part of the Imperial forums, now separated from the Roman Forum by the intrusive Via dei Fori Imperiali. The unmistakable semicircular shape of the markets was determined by Quirinal Hill, which was cut away so that the emperor could build his complex near the Roman Forum. Trajan's Column marks the height of the original hill; its scrolling friezes tell of his victories over the Dacians (in modern-day Romania). Visitors are allowed to roam the ancient street of the forum. An exhibit hall inside the forum has regular art exhibits, many dealing with Imperial Rome. Nearby forums include the Forum of Nerva, the Forum of Julius Caesar and the Forum of Augustus.

Daily 9:30 am-7:30 pm. 14 euros, or 15 euros for tickets booked online (<http://ticket.museiincomuneroma.it/mercati-di-traiano>). .

## Foro Romano

Largo della Salara Vecchia 6 (at Via dei Fori Imperiali)  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-3996-7700

<http://www.archeoroma.beniculturali.it/siti-archeologici/foro-romano-palatino>

Once the political and religious epicenter of the Western world, the Forum today appears as fragmented columns and ancient streets. However, even in ruins, it's a testament to Roman and, indeed, all Western civilization. The best view is from the Capitoline at night, thanks to skillfully placed lighting. Within the Forum are the Sacred Way, the Via Sacra (an avenue where victorious generals paraded with their

soldiers and prisoners) and the ancient Senate House, among a great clutter of basilicas, temples, monuments, arches and stray cats. On the south side of the Forum is the Palatine Museum.

The ruins are open daily 8:30 am until one hour before sunset. Audio tours are available for 5 euros. Nightly tours are offered June to mid-September (check dates at the information desks and ask for *Roma sotto stelle*, or "Rome under the stars"). Combination ticket with the Palatino and the Colosseum 12 euros.

## Hadrian's Villa

Largo Marguerite Yourcenar 1  
Tivoli, Italy

**Phone:** 0774-382-733

<http://www.villaadriana.beniculturali.it>

Hadrian's Villa is the largest and richest estate of the Roman Imperial era. This staggeringly large residence of Emperor Hadrian is one of the most evocative classical sites still standing in Italy. Take a picnic (the tiny snack bar could be better). Local buses stop at the intersection for Hadrian's Villa, but be prepared for a walk.

Daily 9 am to one hour before sunset. 8 euros. An additional 3 euros is charged when there are exhibitions.

## Palatino Hill and Museo

Via di San Gregario 30 (near the Arch of Titus in the Forum)  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-3996-7700

<http://www.coopculture.it/heritage.cfm?id=4>

The Palatine Hill was the site of aristocratic residences for centuries. Among the ruins of private palaces such as the Domus Augustana and the House of Livia, a garden offers shady nooks and spectacular views of the Circo Massimo below. The little museum at the top houses mainly local archaeological finds. A vaulted cavern, discovered in November 2007 when a camera was lowered through a hole in the hill, is believed by some scientists to be a shrine of the Lupercale, the sacred cave where Romulus and Remus are said to have been suckled by a wolf.

Daily 8:30 am until one hour before sunset. Admission of 12 euros includes admission to the Colosseum and the Forum (the ticket kiosk lines are usually shorter at Palatine Hill).

## Piazza del Campidoglio

Capitoline Hill (behind Piazza Venezia and the Vittoriano Monument)  
Rome, Italy

The historic, spiritual and political center of the city, this hilltop was long known as *caput mundi*, the head of the world. On this spot, Petrarch was crowned poet laureate, Cola di Rienzo was lynched, and, according to legend, Romulus killed his brother Remus. The founding twins are commemorated in a happier moment: A bronze statue shows them as foundling infants suckling a she-wolf (this mythological image is the city's crest). The star in the center of the plaza is the point from which distances to Rome are measured.

Michelangelo designed the current piazza and its monumental approach in 1536, although he only lived long enough to see the Cordonata staircase finished. Many consider the site to be the ideal embodiment

of Renaissance architecture, blended with elements of ancient Rome. Guarding the entrance to the piazza are gigantic statues of Castor and Pollux. The circular star set in the pavement focuses attention on the gilded bronze equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius (a copy—the adjacent Capitoline Museums display the original). From the church perched above the piazza, Santa Maria in Ara Coeli, you can get a good view of Rome, and on the road to the right (south) side of the piazza, you'll find one of the best views of the Forum. The piazza also houses the Musei Capitolini and Rome's city hall.

## Piazza del Popolo

Piazza del Popolo (north of the Spanish Steps, near Villa Borghese)  
Rome, Italy

<http://www.turismoroma.it/cosa-fare/piazza-del-popolo>

This vast, well-designed square greeted 18th-century travelers from the north, together with the Porto del Popolo (the arched gateway leading into the piazza). Today, it borders a popular shopping area. Three major arteries extend from the piazza, giving the area its name, the Tridente. An Egyptian obelisk and a lion fountain stand in the piazza's center. At one end are two baroque churches that seem to match, though a close inspection reveals one to have a round dome and the other, oval. At the other end is a third church, Santa Maria del Popolo, which contains masterpieces representing the full range of the Renaissance: frescoes by Pinturicchio, two remarkable paintings by Caravaggio and the dramatic marble statue *Daniel and the Lion* by Bernini.

## Piazza Navona

Piazza Navona (just west of the Pantheon)  
Rome, Italy

<http://www.turismoroma.it/cosa-fare/Piazza-Navona>

Once the Emperor Domitian's athletic stadium, this lively piazza retains its distinctive shape. Terra-cotta and ocher-stucco buildings flank Borromini's baroque church dedicated to St. Agnes, whose skull is displayed in a small chapel in the back. The star attraction, however, is Bernini's legendary *Fountain of the Four Rivers*, with its colossal marble figures—representing the Danube, the Nile, the Ganges and the Rio de la Plata—that writhe and twist, and his *Fountain of the Moor*. A third fountain has a 19th-century rendering of Neptune. The ancient Romans flooded the square and held mock naval battles there. Today, the Piazza Navona is drier but still entertaining: It's the perfect spot for eating gelato, drinking a Negroni (a typical Italian cocktail) and people-watching. Street artists, clowns, toy peddlers and vendors crowd the cobblestones. During the Christmas season, there's a fair with numerous stalls dedicated to La Befana, the Italian Christmas witch. Beware of pickpockets in this crowded space, especially during events.

## Piazza Venezia and the Vittoriano

Via San Pietro in Carcere (at the south end, just north of the Foro Romano)  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-678-3587

<http://www.polomusealelazio.beniculturali.it/index.php?it/244/monumento-a-vittorio-emanuele-ii>

This huge, bustling square unites the city's main arteries. The traffic jam is framed by Palazzo Venezia (from the balcony, Mussolini harangued the crowds below), Palazzo San Marco and the much-maligned Vittoriano Monument. The city's third underground line among the buried ruins has been delayed because of budget cuts, so you are likely to encounter construction in and around the piazza. When the Piazza Venezia subway station finally opens, it will house many Roman artifacts found during the construction. The multistoried memorial to the Unknown Soldier and Italy's first king, Vittorio Emanuele II (inaugurated in 1911), houses a museum of the Risorgimento—the Italian unification movement. Popularly referred to as the Wedding Cake by foreign visitors, the Romans are less kind and call it the Typewriter. This frilly

marble edifice is open to the public. The higher levels and cafe terrace offer great views of the city (considered the best—they're the only vistas that don't include the Vittoriano itself). Near the cafe is the entrance to a glass elevator that takes visitors to the highest rooftop for an even better view. A tourist information office is housed around the left side (as you face the front of the monument).

Daily 9:30 am-7:30 pm (last entrance 7 pm). Free. Elevator 7 euros.

## Spanish Steps and the Piazza di Spagna

Piazza di Spagna (south of Piazza del Popolo, at the southern cusp of Villa Borghese)  
Rome, Italy

<http://www.turismoroma.it/cosa-fare/piazza-di-spagna?lang=en>

The piazza is the heart of Rome's most fashionable shopping area, familiar to residents and visitors alike because of its grand and distinctive steps. However, the iconic steps are closed to the public for renovations until late 2016. When they reopen, they'll continue to be a great—if crowded—place to rest and watch street musicians, vendors, lovers and tourists. Just don't picnic on the steps: The city of Rome has made it illegal to snack on public monuments. Young people gather there to see and be seen, chatting in groups or on their ubiquitous *telefonini* (cell phones). The spectacle is most impressive in spring, when brilliant azaleas line the steps. At the base sits a fountain by Bernini (father and son), and the house (now museum) of 19th-century poet John Keats overlooks the steps. At the top there's a grand view of the city, and just to the right, you will find Palazzetto Zuccari (Via Gregoriana 28), known as The House of Monsters because of the sculptures that adorn the facade.

## Terme di Caracalla

Viale delle Terme di Caracalla 52  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-3996-7700

<http://www.archeoroma.beniculturali.it/en/archaeological-site/baths-caracalla>

The ruins of these baths evoke the majesty of ancient times, when Romans bathed, lifted weights, wrestled, had massages and socialized in these baths and saunas. Guided tours explain the extensive, sophisticated heating and plumbing systems, as well as the social function of the vast complex. Call to make a reservation. You can also wander through the beautiful gardens surrounding the ruins.

Monday 9 am-2 pm, Tuesday-Sunday 9 am-6:30 pm. The ticket office shuts down an hour before closing. A ticket costs 6 euros and is valid for seven days. An audioguide is available for 5 euros.

## The Pantheon

Piazza della Rotonda 1  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-6830-0230

<http://www.pantheonroma.com>

This monumental round temple was dedicated to all the Roman gods. It is considered the best-preserved ancient structure in the city. Rebuilt in the second century by Emperor Hadrian, it has the largest (unreinforced) concrete dome ever built, spanning more than 142 ft/43 m in width and height—a perfect sphere in a cylinder with walls nearly 20 ft/6 m thick. Sunlight pours through the oculus in the center of the dome, casting a spotlight inside the temple. Hadrian only entered the building when the spotlight was cast on the entrance. (When a light rain falls, the effect can be equally enchanting; some visitors claim they've seen a rainbow inside.)

Barbarians took the bronze tiles that originally lined the dome. However, it was Pope Barberini who authorized Bernini to remove the massive bronze bas-relief from the portico. Melted down, it became St. Peter's baldachin. The painter Raphael and the first king of Italy, Vittorio Emanuele II, are buried inside, along with hundreds of early Christian martyrs whose remains were transferred from the catacombs in the seventh century, when the pagan temple was dedicated as a church, Santa Maria ad Martyres.

Monday-Saturday 9 am-7:30 pm, Sunday 9 am-6 pm. Masses are usually held Saturday before public holidays at 5 pm, at 10 am on public holidays, and at midnight on Christmas Eve; no visits during religious services. Free.

## Trevi Fountain

Piazza di Trevi (two blocks east of the Corso and Piazza Colonna)  
Rome, Italy

The iconic, highly theatrical fountain is usually thronged with tourist groups repeating the tradition inspired by the 1954 film *Three Coins in the Fountain*, of throwing in a coin before leaving Rome. Turn your back to the fountain, toss a coin over your left shoulder into the water, and your return to the city is assured. Even with the crowds, you should get a good view of the mighty god Neptune riding his winged chariot through gushing waters supplied by the ancient Acqua Vergine aqueduct. Watch out for pickpockets, though. Nicely illuminated at night.

## Museums

### Centrale Montemartini

Via Ostiense 106 (Piramide)  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-060-608

<http://www.centralemontemartini.org>

One of the most peculiar of all of Rome's museums, this old electric plant outside the city center now houses sculptures from the Musei Capitolini set against restored machinery that was used in early electrical production. The effect is superb, pitting stark white marble statues against massive, shiny, blue-and-black machinery.

Tuesday-Sunday 9 am-7 pm. Admission 7.50 euros.

### Exploraùll Museo dei Bambini di Roma

Via Flaminia 80 (Villa Borghese)  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-361-3776

<http://www.mdbrr.it>

Although it pales in comparison to children's museums in other parts of the world, Rome's only children's museum does offer enough interesting exhibits for the kids to make it a worthwhile trade-off to a day of dragging them through adult museums. The venue is divided into four areas—there are hands-on exhibits dealing with the body, society, nature and communication. Most exhibits are in Italian, but the language is simple enough for nonspeakers to understand.

Open Tuesday-Sunday. Ticket office is open 9:30 am-7:30 pm. Visits are planned to last an hour and 45 minutes, with starting times of 10 am, noon, and 3 and 5 pm. Reservations recommended, and required on Saturday, bank holidays and school holidays. 8 euros adults.

## Galleria Doria Pamphili

Via del Corso 305  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-679-7323

<http://www.doriapamphilj.it/roma>

This museum, located in the sumptuous Doria Pamphili family home, contains works by such greats as Caravaggio, Titian, Raphael and Velasquez.

Daily 9 am-7 pm, last entrance at 6 pm. Admission 12 euros, which includes an audioguide.

## Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea

Viale delle Belle Arti 131 (in Villa Borghese)  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-322-981

<http://www.gnam.beniculturali.it>

This museum has a collection of works by the most important Italian artists of the 19th and 20th centuries—neoclassicists, futurists, surrealists, cubists and pop artists. The futurist collection is particularly impressive, and the fascist art is as chilling as it is fascinating. Works by non-Italians include notable paintings by Gustav Klimt.

Open daily except Monday 8:30 am-7:30 pm. Last admission 6:45 pm. 10 euros adults.

## Keats-Shelley Memorial House and Museum

Piazza di Spagna 26 (entrance at the right of the foot of the Spanish Steps)  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-678-4235

<http://www.keats-shelley-house.org>

More than 8,000 books, letters and related works of John Keats, Percy Shelley, George Gordon (Lord Byron) and their contemporaries are on display, including the rather haunting death mask of Keats, who was only 25 when he died of tuberculosis.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-1 pm and 2-6 pm. 5 euros. Guided tours available upon request.

## Musei Capitolini

Piazza del Campidoglio 1  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-0608

<http://museicapitolini.org>

The renovated palaces framing Piazza del Campidoglio house the Capitoline Museums. The Palazzo dei Conservatori contains paintings by Titian, Paolo Veronese, Peter Paul Rubens and Michelangelo da Caravaggio, as well as fragments of a colossal statue of Constantine and the original of the bronze statue of Marcus Aurelius that crowns the Piazza del Campidoglio outside. The Palazzo Nuovo houses outstanding Roman sculpture, including the Capitoline *Brutus*, the *Dying Gaul* and the Capitoline *Venus*. The museums flank the Palazzo Senatorio, which was built over the ancient Tabularium and used to store government records in imperial Rome. Michelangelo designed its double staircase. The terrace bar and restaurant overlooking the piazza are popular evening spots.



Daily 9:30 am-7:30 pm. Last admission 6:30 pm. Around the Christmas and New Year's holidays, the hours are reduced to 9 am-2 pm. Admission 15 euros (to all three buildings plus temporary exhibits). Audioguide 5 euros.

## Musei Vaticani

Viale Vaticano (follow the Vatican walls from St. Peter's, but keep in mind this is a 0.5-mi-/1-km-long walk; the closest metro stop is Cipro-Musei Vaticani)

Vatican City, Italy

**Phone:** 06-6988-4676

<http://mv.vatican.va>

The Vatican's extensive and awe-inspiring collection of art is housed in several museums, nearly two dozen galleries and period rooms, and, of course, the Sistine Chapel. The huge collections are so spread out, it's impossible to see everything in one visit. You could take several days to appreciate just the Hellenistic and Roman sculpture, and the excellent Egyptian collection.

The Sistine Chapel is the obligatory highlight of a tour through the Vatican Museums: The restored frescoes are glorious. Opera glasses or binoculars can help reveal the details of Michelangelo's famous ceiling. The themes—drawn from the Bible, pagan prophecy and church history—generate what many consider the greatest pictorial decoration in Western art. (Be aware that video recorders and cameras are not allowed in the Sistine Chapel, and the guards strictly enforce a no-talking rule.) Visitors can skip all the other art and go directly to the Chapel.

Time permitting, press on to other important sights: the Raphael rooms, filled with the painter's frescoes in religious themes; the Borgia apartments, with their rich frescoes; the chapels; and the Pio Clementino Museum, where you'll find the famous *Apollo Belvedere* and *Laocoon* sculptures.

If you have the stamina—or, better yet, on another visit—inspect the Greek, Roman and Egyptian rooms; the Pinacoteca, which is filled with paintings from the 12th to 19th centuries; the cartographic hall, which is lined with historical mural maps of regions of Italy; the hall of busts, which is lined with statues of emperors and other Romans of note; the rooms of contemporary art—including works with religious themes by Van Gogh, Monet and Rodin, as well as a set of spectacular liturgical vestments by Matisse; the ethnographic museum; and the collection of historic carriages.

The ticket counter also books two-hour tours of the Vatican Gardens. Admission 32 euros (includes the Vatican Museums). To book, look for the window marked "Garden Guided Tours," or reserve online at least 24 hours ahead.

The museum complex has a snack bar, serving pastry and pizza, and a cafeteria with reasonably priced meals. Note that the museum coat check may store only very large backpacks—not coats, jackets, umbrellas or smaller bags.

The best time to visit the museums is early in the morning, especially on Wednesday when many pilgrims are in St. Peter's Square attending the papal audience. The worst time to visit, as far as crowds go, is on the last Sunday of the month, when admission is free.

We recommend seeing the Basilica and associated Vatican museums by way of a guided tour. We also recommend arriving to see the Sistine Chapel early in the morning before the room fills to the brim with visitors. Arranging a tour with a group can provide opportunities to see areas not open to the public.

The Vatican Museums are open Monday-Saturday 9 am-6 pm (last admission 4 pm). Admission 16 euros. Audioguide 7 euros. Free admission the last Sunday of each month 9 am-12:30 pm; the museums close for the rest of the day. Tickets can be purchased online, allowing you to skip the line.

## Museo dell'Ara Pacis

Via Ripetta (Lungotevere di Augusta)  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-0608

<http://en.arapacis.it>

People either love or hate American architect Richard Meier's stark museum around Rome's "peace altar" next to the Augustus mausoleum along the Tiber River. When the project was finished in 2007, most Romans likened it to a space-age gas station set among some of the city's most beautiful landmarks. But the venue has evolved since its tumultuous opening and is now home to some of Rome's most important exhibits. Designer Valentino held his *40 Years of Style* show there, and the Henri Cartier Bresson exhibition transferred there from the Centre Pompidou in Paris.

The altar itself was dedicated by Augustus in 9 BC. It was eventually destroyed and its tiny pieces scattered across the city of Rome. Efforts began in the 16th century to rebuild the altar after many of its fragments were found in excavations throughout the city. The renovation was completed in 1938.

Daily 9:30 am-7:30 pm. Admission 10.50 euros, plus up to 11 euros for temporary exhibitions. Audioguide 6 euros.

## Museo delle Mura

Via di Porta San Sebastiano 18  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-060-608

<http://en.museodellemuraroma.it>

The Museum of the Walls is small, but mighty. Located in the gate of the Aurelian Wall at Via Appia Antica (Porta San Sebastiano), it allows visitors to see the fortifications inside and out. A small collection of artifacts, information and diagrams exists, but the real draw is walking a portion of the actual wall.

Daily 9 am-9 pm. Free.

## Museo e Galleria Borghese

Piazzale del Museo Borghese 5 (at the east corner of Villa Borghese, near the Via Veneto exit from the Spagna metro stop)  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-32810

<http://www.galleriaborghese.it>

This jewel box of a gallery is a must-see. It offers a feast of Bernini sculptures, from *David*—the biblical lad biting his lip as he gets ready to hurl the stone—to *Apollo and Daphne*—the wood nymph morphing into a laurel tree. Equally beautiful is Canova's reclining *Pauline Bonaparte*, Napoleon's sister, who caused a scandal when she agreed to pose in the nude. Dozens of other sculptures, along with paintings and ceiling frescoes, will mesmerize you on the first floor. Upstairs, in the picture gallery, are masterpieces by Titian, Raphael and Michelangelo da Caravaggio (including his famous *Bacchus* and the hauntingly dark *St. Jerome*).

Keep your ticket handy—visitors must exit the building and re-enter to go upstairs—and also be quick: Visits are limited to two hours, which will fly by quickly. You may want to plan several visits to appreciate this collection in its entirety.

Tuesday-Sunday 8:30 am-7:30 pm. Tickets have assigned entry times every two hours starting at opening time, with the last entry two hours before closing. 11 euros. The museum is very busy and advance reservations by telephone are required. An audioguide is 5 euros. Guided tours in English are offered by appointment for groups of at least 10.

## Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giulia

Piazzale di Villa Giulia 9 (Villa Borghese)  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-320-1706

<http://www.villagiulia.beniculturali.it>

The country's best-preserved Etruscan ruins all end up in the Villa Giulia, which was, until the late 19th century, a decadent papal palace. The museum is divided by geographical area, with detailed maps of ancient Etruria and multilanguage signs providing significant historical information about this pre-Roman era. Many pieces date from the sixth century BC. Villa Giulia also houses many artifacts that have been recovered from American museums, whose curators years ago bought the pieces from tomb raiders who pilfered Italy's best Etruscan sites.

Open daily except Monday 8:30 am-7:30 pm; last entry one hour before closing. 8 euros.

## Museo Nazionale Palazzo Altemps

Piazza Sant'Apollinare 46  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-3996-7700

<http://archeoroma.beniculturali.it/en/museums/national-roman-museum-palazzo-altemps>

Part of the Museo Nazionale Romano, this museum houses the Ludovisi, Mattei and Altemps families' art collections, including many ancient sculptures. The 15th-century palace, with its frescoes and painted ceilings, is a gem of the Roman Renaissance. The palace is also a venue for evening concerts in the summer. The terrace cafe is a perfect lunch spot during the summer months.

Tuesday-Sunday 9 am-7:45 pm. Ticket office closes at 7 pm. Admission 7 euros; valid three days and includes admission to Crypta Balbi, Palazzo Massimo alle Terme and Terme di Diocleziano. An additional 3 euros is charged when there are special exhibitions. An audioguide is available for 5 euros.

## Museo Nazionale Romano à Crypta Balbi

Via delle Botteghe Oscure 31  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-3996-7700

<http://www.coopculture.it/heritage.cfm?id=50>

This archaeological gem peels back Rome's layers. The *crypta* (lobby) of the Teatro di Balbi has multimedia displays explaining the rising tide of history. Best of all, the ruins are interleaved with Plexiglas, demonstrating what excavators actually find (rather than what they put together).

Tuesday-Sunday 9 am-7:45 pm. 7 euros plus 3 euros for temporary exhibitions; valid three days and includes admission to Terme di Diocleziano, Palazzo Altemps and Palazzo Massimo alle Terme.

## Palazzo Barberini

Via delle Quattro Fontane 13 (Metro stop: Barberini)  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-32810

<http://www.galleriaborghese.it/eng/galleriaBarberini.html>

Two rival baroque architects and sculptors, Bernini and Borromini, worked on this grand residence, which now shelters the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica. You will see gems by Michelangelo da Caravaggio, Titian and Jacopo Tintoretto and the portrait of Henry VIII by Hans Holbein, as well as the spectacular baroque ceiling fresco by Pietro da Cortona and the finest collection of El Greco's work outside of the Prado. Nine rooms allow more of the collection to be viewed, so reservations are not essential.

Open daily except Monday 8:30 am-7 pm. 7 euros adults.

## Palazzo Massimo alle Terme

Largo di Villa Peretti 1 (across Piazza dei Cinquecento from the Terme di Diocleziano)  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-3996-7700

<http://archeoroma.beniculturali.it/en/museums/national-roman-museum-palazzo-massimo-alle-terme>

Part of the Museo Nazionale Romano, this restored palace displays a number of Roman paintings, coins, bronze statues, marble busts, floor mosaics and an entire frescoed room from Villa Livia.

Tuesday-Sunday 9 am-7:45 pm. 7 euros; valid three days and includes admission to Terme di Diocleziano, Palazzo Altemps and Crypta Balbi. Call for reservations and to ask about guided tours.

## Terme di Diocleziano

Viale Enrico de Nicola 79 (at the Piazza dei Cinquecento)  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-3996-7700

<http://archeoroma.beniculturali.it/en/museums/national-roman-museum-baths-diocletian>

These ancient Roman baths, part of the Museo Nazionale Romano, house an impressive collection of ancient Roman mosaics, coins, artifacts and statues.

Tuesday-Sunday 9 am-7:30 pm. 8 euros; valid three days and includes admission to Palazzo Massimo alle Terme, Palazzo Altemps and Crypta Balbi. Entrance fee may vary when there are special exhibitions.

## Neighborhoods & Districts

### Campo Marzio

This part of the historic center contains much that is great about Rome: the Pantheon, Piazza Navona, Campo di Fiori and Via Giulia. Bordered by the Vatican and the Tiber to the west, it's a dense cluster of ruins, churches, monuments, squares, alleys and shops. Rich in sights, much of the area is not the best option for dining ("tourist menus" and solicitors are common, as well as high tariffs for cafe seats). The best bets are on small side streets.

## Jewish Ghetto

This neighborhood—tucked between Via Arenula and Via del Teatro di Marcello and bordered by Largo Argentina—was historically the ghetto of the Roman Jews. Today, its winding narrow streets retain more of the flavor of medieval Rome than any other part of the city. It also has a stunning synagogue on the bank of the Tiber, the best kosher Italian restaurants in the world (along Via del Portico d'Ottavia) and some of the trendiest nightspots in Rome.

## L'Aventino

One of the seven hills on which Rome was founded is now one of the city center's most cosmopolitan residential areas, with fabulous villas and lush gardens. Legend says that Romulus chose the Palatine hill and his twin Remus chose the Aventine hill. Peek through the keyhole at the door to the Knights of Malta to see a perfect view of the dome of St. Peter's basilica, or catch a panoramic view of Trastevere from one of several lookout points. The neighborhood is a great place to stroll during spring, when the scents of orange blossoms from Giardino degli Aranci and fresh roses from Roseto Comunale rose gardens offer a dizzying olfactory experience.

## Monti

Ancient Rome's shantytown (*Suburra*) is now gentrified under the design of artists, hipsters and up-and-comers. Its once-cheap property is now among the most expensive in Rome. Ethnic restaurants, galleries, bars and funky shops flank its narrow alleys. The main square is often filled to capacity on weekends, when locals go out to visit and sip coffee or wine at the cafes around the perimeter. The area stretches east from the Forum between Via Nazionale and Via Cavour.

## Parioli

Sheep pastures were interspersed among the medieval and Renaissance buildings in this area at the beginning of the 20th century. Now it's one of the most expensive and cosmopolitan suburban areas of Rome. Many foreign embassies and consulates are located there, along with some fine restaurants. It lies just north of Villa Borghese and west of La Sapienza (Rome's central university).

## Testaccio

One of the trendiest areas to eat, dance and live is Testaccio, across the Tiber from Trastevere at the bottom of the Aventine hill. The district is marked by a peculiar hill made from the shards of terra-cotta pots that carried wine and oil brought in boats coming down the Tiber from the sea. Merchants would fill their vats with the oil or wine and toss the used pots aside. Old stables and stalls from a Roman slaughterhouse that were built onto the side of the terra-cotta hill have been transformed into nightclubs and restaurants. An exhibit space run by the MACRO Museo D'Arte Contemporanea Roma on the old slaughterhouse grounds hosts fascinating exhibits, including a semipermanent 82-ft-/25-m-tall bamboo climbing structure. The shops and boutiques cater to the residents of a certain class who live on the posh Aventine Hill. The streets are lined with cafes and some of the best restaurants in all of Rome. The area is commonly referred to as the preferred place for Romans to dine.

## Trastevere

Literally meaning "across the Tiber," this was Rome's first suburb, and many residents insist it's the "real" Rome. The district is a thriving tangle of charming medieval streets, vibrant outdoor restaurants and trattorias, intimate bars and cafes. Trastevere is home to an array of galleries and artisans' shops, plus the large Sunday flea market, Porta Portese. The Church of Santa Maria dominates the piazza of the same name. The steps of the central fountain there are a good place to watch the area's colorful characters. To the west rises the Gianicolo Hill, which offers magnificent views from a ridgeline park.

## Parks & Gardens

### Gianicolo (Janiculum Hill)

Viale delle Mura Aurelie (on the hill between Piazza San Pietro and the Trastevere neighborhood)  
Rome, Italy

This long, thin hill near the west bank of the Tiber River has wonderful views—it's the highest spot in the city. To get there from the Centro Storico—a steep but pleasant walk—cross the river on Ponte Sisto and climb Via Garibaldi. At the top is an equestrian statue of Giuseppe Garibaldi, and farther north, another of his wife, Anita, on a rearing horse, brandishing a baby and a gun. The lovely Passeggiata del Gianicolo is lined with other statues of national heroes. Every day at noon, a cannon (a howitzer, no less) is fired from below the Garibaldi statue.

### Orto Botanico

Largo Cristina di Svezia 24 (between the Gianicolo and the Tiber)  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-4991-7107

<https://web.uniroma1.it/ortobotanico>

Rome's botanic gardens are near the center of town, and their easy access makes them a relaxing break in what may be an otherwise crowded tourist schedule. They contain a wide variety of palms, a lovely terraced rose garden, enchanting stands of bamboo and a Japanese garden complete with a pagoda. The gardens occupy part of Queen Christina of Sweden's former villa, of which there are a few deteriorated reminders: Look for the fragment of a monumental staircase next to a grand, 350-year-old plane tree. Also of interest is a small garden for the blind with plants noted for their distinctive aromas and textures.

Monday-Saturday 9:30 am-6:30 pm (closes at 5:30 pm in winter). 8 euros.

### Parco dei Mostri

Localita Giardino  
Bagnai, Italy

**Phone:** 0761-924-029

<http://www.sacrobosco.it>

Bomarzo village, 7 mi/12 km northeast of Bagnai, contains the silly and sublime Monster Park (*Parco dei Mostri*—also called the Sacred Grove, *Sacro Bosco*). This surreal sculpture garden—sort of a 16th-century theme park—is one of northern Lazio's primary attractions.

Daily 8:30 am to one hour before sunset. 10 euros.

### Roseto Comunale

Via di Valle Murcia 6 (Aventino)  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-574-6810 to arrange a guided tour

<https://www.comune.roma.it/pcr/it/newsview.page?contentId=NEW619967>

Covering 2.5 acres/1 hectare of land between the Aventine and Palatine hills, Rome's communal rose gardens are among the best in Europe. More than 1,200 varieties of ancient, botanical and modern roses

are divided into two sections—one for competition and another for collection. The gardens, which were built on the site of an old Jewish cemetery, are laid out in the shape of a candelabrum.

Open daily 8 am-7 pm mid-April to mid-June. Free.

## Villa Borghese

Piazza di Siena (in the triangle formed by Piazza di Spagna, Piazza del Popolo and Via Veneto)  
Rome, Italy

This large, peaceful city park has several museums, leafy walks, statuary, an artificial lake, stands of impressive umbrella pines and Rome's zoo, called Bioparco. Several foreign academies dot its boulevards. The park is a welcome reprieve from the noise and heat of the city. It's a favorite spot for strolling, jogging and walking dogs. In-line skates, go-karts and electric golf carts can all be rented there, usually near the main street that leads to the Pincio Gardens, which include the famous water clock and a fabulous view of Piazza del Popolo and St. Peter's Basilica in the distance (one of the most famous spots in Rome to admire a summer sunset).

## Villa Doria Pamphili

Via Aurelia Antica (south of the Vatican and west of Gianicolo; enter through the gates near Porta San Pancrazio)  
Rome, Italy

This large park is one of the best places for exercising or relaxing, and it is especially popular with joggers, although it can get crowded on Sunday afternoon. Each turn and corner offers a glimpse of a delightful garden, fountain or cluster of statues. A beautiful villa and private garden stand in the center of the park.

## Shopping

Rome's trendy stores with the latest fashions just might divert you from seeing one more museum. Fans of Prada, Fendi, Ferragamo or Gucci will have plenty to choose from. What's more, those famous brands, which are available around the world, will seem different: Even the designers known for the purity of their lines—Armani, for instance—seem to offer something a little more baroque in Rome. But the true joy of shopping in this city lies in discovering one-of-a-kind items in specialty shops. Hundreds of such stores sell goods, particularly shoes and clothing accessories, that are produced on-site, often using centuries-old techniques.

Beyond the world of high fashion, you can check out the upscale secondhand shops on Via del Governo Vecchio, the artisan studios of Trastevere and the galleries of Monti. Rome also has a handful of markets, each with a distinctive style. The colorful and inviting Campo dei Fiori offers cheeses, spices, some clothing, kitchenware and, of course, flowers (the name means "field of flowers"). The Sunday flea market at Porta Portese, the largest in Europe, is not for the faint of heart—shoppers are packed in so tightly it becomes an effort just to stop or cross the street. Go early and beware of pickpockets.

Much of Rome—and indeed, Italy—shuts down for several weeks in the summer heat. This period can stretch from mid-July through August. The one advantage: superb sales beforehand.

**Shopping Hours:** Stores are generally open Monday-Saturday 9 am-1 pm and 4:30-7:30 pm. Most stores are closed all day Sunday, and some take Monday morning off, as well. The exception is the Centro Storico, where a seven-day shopping culture is emerging. In winter, many boutiques have reduced hours, although most open their doors until 8:30 or 9 pm two weeks before Christmas.

## Department Stores

### COIN

Via Cola di Rienzo 173  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-3600-4298

<http://www.coin.it>

Expect fashionable—but typical—men's and women's casual and dress wear and shoes, as well as glasses, cosmetics, perfumes and furniture. Branches dot the city. There's even a convenient location at the Termini train station.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-8 pm, Sunday 10:30 am-8 pm.

### La Rinascente

Piazza Fiume (Via del Corso, in the Galleria Alberto Sordi)  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-678-4209

<http://www.rinascente.it>

Classic men's and women's clothing and some housewares, as well as cosmetics and accessories, are found there at moderate prices.

Open daily 10 am-9 pm.

## Markets

### Campo dei Fiori

Campo dei Fiori (between the river and Corso Vittorio Emanuele II)  
Rome, Italy

At this white-tented market, vendors hawk beautiful flowers, fresh produce, spices and food delicacies, especially cheeses. The best bread-maker in all of Rome, Forno, is located there—try the *pizza bianca*, considered by Roman cognoscenti to be the best in the city. On Sunday afternoon, artists sell paintings in the square.

Prime market hours are Monday-Saturday 7 am-1:30 pm, when most vendors are set up and ready to sell.

### Nuovo Esquilino Market

Via Principe Aedeo 184 (near Stazione Termini and Vittorio Emanuele metro station)  
Rome, Italy

Heart of multicultural Rome, this market is divided in two parts: one for textiles, clothes and shoes, and one for food and groceries. It's the right place if you are looking for spices, tropical fruits and ingredients from all over the world.

Monday-Saturday 7 am-3 pm.



## Porta Portese

Ponte Sublicio (on the west side of the Tiber, spanning a warren of streets and alleys)  
Rome, Italy

Rome's flea market sells practically everything—from a doghouse and an 18th-century sofa to old and new pearls (strung in India) and icons of dubious heritage. Look through tables of used clothing, including the occasional vintage design. As a rule, the best and most interesting finds are in the stalls around Piazza Ippolito Nievo. Bargaining is half the fun—expect high drama when you offer a few euros less. Be extremely wary of pickpockets, because the aisles get crowded.

Sunday 7 am-2 pm.

## Via Sannio Market

Via Sannio (near Porta San Giovanni)  
Rome, Italy

This place sells new and secondhand clothes and shoes.

Monday-Saturday 8 am-2 pm.

## Shopping Areas

### Castel Romano Designer Outlet Mall

Via Ponte di Piscina Cupa 64  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-505-0050

<http://www.mcarthurglen.com/it/castel-romano-designer-outlet>

Regular shuttle buses at 9:30, 9:55 and 11:30 am and 12:30 and 3 pm from Termini train station are available to take shoppers to the Castel Romano Designer Outlet Mall 16 mi/25 km outside the city. Return buses run 10:45 am-8:05 pm. The open-air mall has more than 100 boutiques, many of them Italian luxury brands, offering merchandise at 70% savings.

Daily 10 am-8 pm.

### Galleria Alberto Sordi

Piazza Colonna  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-6919-0769

<http://www.galleriaalbertosordi.it>

Alberto Sordi was perhaps Italy's most popular comic actor. His death in 2003 led to more than two weeks of national mourning and dozens of monuments and dedications in his honor. The most famous of these was the reopening of the Galleria Colonna, rechristened Galleria Alberto Sordi. This beautiful building houses dozens of shops, a few cafes and Feltrinelli's enormous media shop. The Galleria has become one of the primary cultural focal points for the city, hosting concerts, poetry readings, charity rallies and art exhibitions. It has even replaced the Spanish Steps as the default meeting point for locals.

Monday-Saturday 8:30 am-9 pm, Sunday 9:30 am-9 pm.

## Via Cola di Rienzo

Via Cola di Rienzo  
Rome, Italy

Starting at Piazza Risorgimento near the Vatican, this long, somewhat unprepossessing street is an excellent shopping area for nearly everything, especially for women's clothing and leather products. It's popular with locals.

## Via del Corso

Via del Corso  
Rome, Italy

This central street, running from Piazza del Popolo to Piazza Venezia, has the best (and some of the most expensive) shopping in Rome. The east side of the street, near Piazza di Spagna, hosts upscale boutiques. Two cross streets, Via Frattina and Via Condotti, are a veritable who's who of designer names (with street vendors selling counterfeit wares right in front of the designers they're imitating). On the west side are more reasonably priced men's and women's clothes (still of exceptional quality). Near the Trevi Fountain, you may even be able to find some bargains, especially in shoes and leather goods.

## Via Nazionale

Via Nazionale  
Rome, Italy

This street, which stretches from Piazza Venezia to Piazza della Repubblica, is lined with small specialty fashion shops known for attractive sale prices in July and January. Most of the best shops are at the end closest to Piazza della Repubblica.

## Specialty Stores

Most specialty shops are one-person or family operations, and their opening hours are completely dependent on the owners.

## Al Sogno

Piazza Navona 53  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-686-4198

<http://www.alsogno.com>

Tiny lead soldiers line up to protect unusual dolls and lifelike plush animals, all in a charming setting. The perfect place to buy a gift, but the wares are aimed more at adult nostalgia than children.

Daily 10 am-8 pm; extended hours in summer.

## Antica Norcineria Viola

Piazza Campo de' Fiori 43  
Rome, Italy

One of the best places in the Centro Storico to buy prosciutto and more than 100 different salamis produced in the city of Norcia in Umbria. Ever tried anise salami?

Monday-Saturday 8 am-1:30 pm and 4:30-8 pm.

## Berte

Piazza Navona 107-111  
Rome, Italy

This family-run toy shop at the other end of Piazza Navona is much more child-friendly than Al Sogno, with all the current toys that children are likely to want: some original and handmade toys, dress-up clothes and a selection of pocket toys.

Daily 10 am-8:30 pm.

## Borsalino

Piazza del Popolo 20  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-3265-0838

<http://www.borsalino.com>

Borsalino has been in the hat-making business for more than a century, and that experience is reflected in its quality goods. The milliner carries a selection of stylish accessories, belts and gloves, too.

Monday 3:30-7:30 pm, Tuesday-Saturday 10 am-7:30 pm, Sunday 10:30 am-7:30 pm.

## Calamo

Via del Plebiscito 101  
Rome, Italy

This shop between Piazza delle Torre Argentina and Piazza Venezia sells quirky clothes, all made on the premises. Each item is unique, but the scarves, skirts, tops and coats all match in spirit. The prices are reasonable.

## C.U.C.I.N.A.

Via Mario de' Fiori 65  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-679-1275

<http://www.cucinastore.com>

What Italian kitchens are made of: gadgets, pans, odd little devices. This store has everything you need to stock the home kitchen and set the table.

Monday 3:30-7:30 pm, Tuesday-Friday 10 am-7:30 pm, Saturday 10:30 am-7:30 pm.

## Eataly

Piazzale XII Ottobre 1492  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-9027-9201

<http://www.eataly.it>

This three-story glass shrine to Italian cuisine is a must-stop for foodies and nonfoodies alike. The giant space is divided into areas dedicated to pasta, spices, wine and funky kitchen gadgets interspersed with restaurants, wine corners, a beer hall and a fresh market.

Daily 10 am-midnight.

## Fornari & Fornari

Via Frattina 133  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-678-0105

<http://www.fornari1905.com>

Finest Italian designer kitchenware. This is the place to stock up on beautiful silverware, glassware, crockery and tabletop accessories for your Italian cooking back home.

Monday 3:30-7:30 pm, Tuesday-Saturday 10 am-7:30 pm.

## Giorgio Sermoneta

Piazza di Spagna 61  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-679-1960

<http://www.sermonetagloves.com>

Stars and fashionistas stock up on this shop's beautiful handmade leather gloves, lined with silk or cashmere. Chose a favorite fancy cuff and pick from a riot of colors.

Monday-Saturday 9:30 am-8 pm, Sunday 10:30 am-7 pm.

## Joseph Debach

Piazza de Renzi 21 (Trastevere)  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 327-001-9471

<http://www.josephdebach.it>

These handmade shoes are works of art—some resemble sultans' slippers with curled-up toes. Don't bother visiting during the day, though. The shop is a fixture of Trastevere nightlife and never opens before 7:30 pm (though phone orders are accepted). Closed Friday.

## Polvere di Tempo, Guaytamelli

Via del Moro 59 (Trastevere)  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-588-0704

<http://www.polvereditempo.com>

This store specializes in archaic mechanisms for telling time. It has an impressive selection of handmade hourglasses, sundials, solar clocks, water clocks, candle clocks and other antique instruments, as well as a small collection of jewelry and leather goods.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-8 pm (until 9 pm in summer).

## Trimani

Via Goito 20 (near Termini)  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-446-9661

<http://www.trimani.com>

This elegant wine shop is one of the best in Rome, offering a large selection of wines from Italy and France, as well as spirits and liquors.

Monday-Saturday 9 am-8:30 pm.

## Valzani

Via del Moro 37B (Trastevere)  
Rome, Italy

This is one source of those lavish hostess gifts that Romans bestow, all gussied up with wrapping paper and ribbons. Valzani stocks handmade chocolate candies, nougat and traditional Italian treats. Its gorgeous Sacher torte is hard to resist, so why try?

Daily 10 am-8 pm; closed during July and August.

## Volpetti

Via Marmorata 47, Testaccio  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-574-2352

<http://www.volpetti.com>

Savor the gourmet cuisine of Norcia, in Umbria, a region famed for its cheese, ham and sausages. The store overflows with delicacies such as wild-boar ham, Piedmontese cheese with white truffles (*crutin*), farmed Italian caviar (*calvisius*) and 200-euro bottles of 50-year-old balsamic vinegar (*aceto balsamico tradizionale di Modena*). The best place in Rome to buy a picnic and then head for a park or garden.

Monday-Saturday 8:30 am-2 pm and 5-8:15 pm.

## Dining

### Dining Overview

Each region of Italy boasts its own distinctive cuisine, and because Rome has become home to Italians from all over the country, the city's native, rustic cuisine has been influenced by many different sources. For a true taste of the indigenous *cucina povera* (food of the poor people), be sure to sample the food at a number of humble trattorias, not just the upscale restaurants. Classic dishes include spaghetti carbonara, *bucatini all'amatriciana* (straw-shaped noodles in a tomato and bacon sauce), *l'abbacchio* (roast lamb), *carciofi alla giudia* (deep-fried artichokes) and the most Roman of all: *trippa* (tripe).

Tuscan and Sicilian restaurants usually provide more elegant meals and refined dining. Begin with an antipasto of marinated vegetables, seafood, bruschetta or a selection of meats. Prosciutto *crudo* is often served with melon or figs in the summer. The first course is almost always a pasta dish, such as *penne all'arrabbiata* (quills with a chili-tomato sauce), *linguine con vongole veraci* (linguine with clam sauce) or *pasta e fagioli* (short pasta cooked in a thick bean soup). For a second (main) course, try *rombo* (turbot), *spigola* (sea bass) or *straccetti con basilico e parmigiano* (thin-sliced beef topped with fresh rocket lettuce and Parmesan cheese).

Italian meals typically run five courses from antipasti to *dolce* (dessert), followed by coffee and a *digestivo*. Visitors are under no obligation to order all of them. However, two courses is the polite minimum at a busy establishment. Given the leisurely pace of dining, you've "bought the table for the evening"—don't abuse such hospitality by ordering only a salad. Light eaters should try fancier places for

lunch—or retreat to a cafe, cafeteria (*tavola calda*), pizzeria or slice shop (*pizza al taglio*). The latter also can provide a great snack on the go; while you're there, sample the *suppli* (deep-fried rice balls with tomato sauce and a molten mozzarella core). Be aware that sitting at a *tavola calda* will increase the price of your meal; order your lunch *portare via* (to take away).

The region's most famous wines are the dry whites—Vini dei Castelli (Frascati, Genzano, Marino and Velletri). To accompany meat dishes, choose a full-bodied dry red from the regions of Tuscany or Piemonte, or one of the reds from up-and-coming wine regions such as Sicily or Umbria. Romans typically order a carafe of house wine (*vino della casa*) usually from the countryside near Rome in the case of whites and from the adjacent region of Abruzzo for reds—selections are usually decent and reasonably priced. Be forewarned, however: The liter unit is 25% larger than a typical bottle—and public drunkenness is frowned upon (half- and quarter-liters are also available).

The main local beers are Peroni, Moretti and Nastro Azzurro, which are well-made lagers on the lighter side—fans of heavier beers will have to opt for an import. Order *acqua naturale* (flat water) or *frizzante* (sparkling) with each meal. Other nonalcoholic treats include fresh-squeezed juice (*spremuta*) and lemonade (*limonata*).

Italian coffee is ubiquitous—and unmissable. Even those who normally dislike espresso may appreciate the smooth genuine version. Baristi brew dozens of variations of the simple shot (order *un caffè* and not *un espresso* in Rome). At more casual establishments, pay at the register (*la cassa*), and then present the receipt (*lo scontrino*) at the counter, with a small coin (0.10 or 0.20 euros) on top as a tip. Table service can increase the price—by as much as 500% in a tourist hot spot. Also note that locals drink cappuccino only for breakfast—never in the evening or after meals. Gelato, the heavenly Italian ice cream, is appropriate any time of the day or night.

Modern life has trimmed the traditional five meals a day. Italians aren't generally big on breakfast (usually cappuccino with a sugar-glazed croissant or a cream-filled pastry), but brunch is popular. Lunch, around 1 pm, can consist of one course or several (restaurants close 3-7 pm, so don't wait). Dinner can be either a leisurely affair with several courses or just pizza and beer.

Expect to pay within these general guidelines, based on the cost of a three-course dinner for one, not including drinks or tip: \$ = less than 30 euros; \$\$ = 30 euros-45 euros; \$\$\$ = 46 euros-75 euros; and \$\$\$\$ = more than 75 euros.

Tax is almost always included in the price of meals. The bill (*conto*) may feature *pane e coperto* (bread and a cover charge) or *servizio* (service). Tip 5% atop the *coperto* or 10% otherwise (Italians offer less, but tourists are expected to be gracious).

## Local & Regional

### Ambasciata d'Abruzzo

Via Pietro Tacchini 26 (Parioli)  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-807-8256

<http://www.ambasciatadiabruzzo.com>

This restaurant showcases fare from the mountainous Abruzzo region, east of Rome. The bruschetta appetizers are among the city's best, proving that toast-with-toppings can reach culinary heights. The *tonnarelli cacio e pepe* (pasta with sheep's cheese and pepper) is another standout. Porcini mushrooms and truffles feature heavily—never a bad thing.

Daily for lunch and dinner. \$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

## Ambasciata di Capri

Via E.Q. Visconti 52  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-322-6812

<http://www.ambasciatadicapri.com>

This wonderful restaurant close to the Vatican serves delicious specialties from the island of Capri, including black ravioli with cuttlefish, and the *pezzogna*, a tender fish that only swims in the waters of the Gulf of Naples. But the *dolci* make the fame of this restaurant, and rumor has it that owner Mario Tarantino sends a selection of them to the pope once a month. Try the ricotta tart with pears, the tiramisu and the wonderful *pastiera*, a shortcrust cake with ricotta and buffalo-milk cheese.

Daily for lunch and dinner. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

## Angelina

Via Poli 27 (near the Trevi Fountain)  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-679-7274

<http://www.ristoranteangelina.com/en/ristorante-angelina-a-trevi.html>

This popular restaurant has two locations: a quaint tavern near the Trevi Fountain and a spacious restaurant with a rooftop terrace in Testaccio. Both offer the best Sunday brunch in Rome for 15 euros. The restaurant doesn't close between lunch and dinner, so it is a perfect place to eat a late lunch or early dinner. The atmosphere is casual and relaxed, and the whitewashed decor and green plants make it feel like a country home. The menu offers a dizzying selection of unique takes on traditional Roman fare, from offal to T-bone Florentine steaks. The Testaccio location is at Via Galvani 24 (phone 06-5728-3840).

Daily 9 am-midnight, Saturday and Sunday brunch noon-4 pm. \$\$.

## Bibere Bistrot

Via Antonio Pacinotti 83  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-556-2738

<http://www.biberebistrot.it>

A modern trattoria in the Ostiense neighborhood, where chef Andrea Massari creates traditional dishes with a modern twist. The haute cuisine experience is paired with excellent wines, while from the bar you can order draft artisan beer and ambrosial cocktails. Set in a historic building from the beginning of the 20th century, now the restaurant welcomes its guests in a contemporary design a stone's throw away from the Gasometer, symbol of local industrial archaeology.

Tuesday-Saturday 6:30 pm-1 am, Sunday 12:30-3:30 pm. \$\$.

## Checchino dal 1887

Via Monte di Testaccio 30  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-574-3816

<http://www.checcchino-dal-1887.com>

Few restaurants can still claim to preserve—and serve—traditional Roman food as Checchino has been doing since 1887. Its claim to fame is the invention of *la coda alla vaccinara*—a distinctive dish made from less-popular cuts of meat. It carries the official *cucinaromana* designation. Excellent wine list.

Tuesday-Saturday for lunch and dinner, Sunday for lunch. Closed in August and for a week around Christmas. Reservations required. No shorts or tank tops allowed. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

## Colline Emiliane

Via degli Avignonesi 22  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-481-7538

<http://www.collineemiliane.com>

Try the mouthwatering classic Bolognese dishes in this tiny, but very popular, family-run restaurant just off Piazza Barberini, where you'll find Bernini's Triton Fountain.

Tuesday-Saturday 12:45-2:45 pm and 7:30-11:45 pm. Reservations required. \$\$\$.

## Enoteca Corsi

Via del Gesu 88  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-679-0821

<http://www.enotecacorsi.com>

One of the best—and least pretentious—places to eat lunch in the normally pricey city center. The look of the place is virtually unchanged since it opened its doors in 1943, and it is a favorite of local businesspeople and power brokers, as well as students and blue-collar workers. Prices are reasonable, and the menu is limited to a few tasty choices each day, scrawled on wall-hung chalkboards (wonderful gnocchi and great *saltimbocca alla romana*). Go to the back and turn to the right for the wine store, which has a few extra tables in it and a still-more-charming atmosphere. Wine is also available to take away.

Monday-Saturday for lunch, Thursday and Friday for dinner. The wine store is open Monday-Saturday 9 am-1 pm and 5-8 pm. Reservations not accepted except for large parties. \$. No credit cards.

## Enoteca Ferrara

Piazza Trilussa 41 (there is also an entrance at Via del Moro 1-A)  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-5833-3920

<http://www.enotecaferrara.it>

This enchanting enoteca in the heart of Trastevere started out as a tiny, backstreet hole-in-the-wall wine bar owned by two sisters and has grown to encompass most of the bottom floor of a medieval palazzo. View the expansive wine cellar from the glass floor in the main bar, or head straight to the dining area where recipes inspired by the old tradition of the *cucina povera* ("poor man's kitchen") are reinvented into



modern fare. Sicilian dishes (*involtini of pesce spada*, or swordfish rolls) and northern delights (thick vegetable soups) are the best offerings.

Daily for dinner, Sunday for lunch as well. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

## Etabli

Vicolo delle Vacche 9  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-9761-6694

<http://www.etabli.it>

This place's culinary style mixes authentic tradition and an innovative creativity, with dishes such as salmon tartare, *cacio e pepe* spaghetti and the vegetarian *parmigiana*. With a rich bar offering everything from coffee to cappuccino, tea and hot chocolate, Etabli is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner. For dinner, booking is recommended. This is a favorite spot for an after-dinner drink in the heart of the Roman nightlife.

Monday-Wednesday 7 am-1 am, Thursday Saturday 7 am-2 am, Sunday 9 am-1 am.

## Felice a Testaccio

Via Mastro Giorgio 29 (Testaccio)  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-574-6800

<http://www.feliceatestaccio.it>

One of the tastiest and most colorful restaurants in the city center's working-class district. The restaurant was established in 1936 by legendary restaurateur Felice Trivelloni, who was temperamental enough to deny a second course to diners who didn't finish their first. The pasta is to die for—try the simple and addictive Pasta al Felice (ricotta, tomatoes, mint and chili)—and the suckling lamb served in cooler months is unforgettable. Oscar-winning actor Roberto Benigni adored the restaurant so much he wrote a poem in its honor. It's still run by the Trivelloni family.

Daily for lunch and dinner. Reservations are required and rarely accepted the day of the meal. \$\$-\$\$\$\$. Visa and MasterCard accepted.

## Gino al Villino

Largo Alessandrina Ravizza 12 (take Tram 8 to the Ravizza stop)  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-5823-3977

<http://www.ginoalvillino.it>

This small trattoria has been around since 1958, kept secret by its location just outside the city center. Don't expect the servers to speak English, but do look forward to some of the best Roman cooking possible. The menu changes daily, and the chef's inventions are always worth trying. Staples include *polenta con salsiccia* (polenta and Roman sausages) and *gnocchi al parmigiano* (potato-based dumplings in a parmigiano sauce). Adventurous diners sometimes continue with *la trippa* (tripe in a tomato and cheese sauce).

Thursday-Tuesday for lunch and dinner. Closed for two weeks in August. \$. Most major credit cards.

## Giovanni

Via Marche 64  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-482-1834

<http://www.ristorantegiovanni1993.it>

A kind and efficient family from the Marche region owns this pleasant, comfortable restaurant. It has been tastefully redecorated and brought up to standard for disabled access. The cuisine is delicate and simple. Ask for the traditional *tagliolini al sugo di carne* (house-made pasta with red meat sauce) or the lentil soup. For dessert, savor the *millefoglie* (multilayered, cream-filled puff pastry).

Tuesday-Friday for lunch and dinner, Saturday for dinner; closed in August. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

## Hostaria Antica Roma

Via Appia Antica 176  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 348-792-6955

<http://www.anticaroma.it>

Dining on the Appian Way, you'll be surrounded by Roman ruins—one wall of the dining room is actually an ancient columbarium, which held ashes of the deceased. Hostaria Antica Roma is an ideal choice when visiting the Catacombs of San Callisto, but otherwise it's out of the way. For a full, historically accurate Roman menu, diners must reserve three days in advance, but some elements of the menu are always available.

Tuesday-Sunday for lunch and dinner. Reservations required. \$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

## Hostaria dell'Orso di Gualtiero Marchesi

Via dei Soldati 25-C  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-6830-1192

<http://www.hdo.it>

One of the icons of the Roman dining scene, the Hostaria dell'Orso is a gem located in an opulent 15th-century palace with a view of the Tiber. It has been a favorite of dignitaries ranging from Goethe to Clark Gable, and is known for its contrast of ancient architecture, modern furnishings and an unforgettable menu that includes a tasty seared scallop salad with ginger, and homemade *tortelli* with pumpkin and marjoram. The wine list is impressive.

Monday-Saturday for dinner. Reservations required. \$\$\$\$.

## L'Antico Arco

Piazzale Aurelio 7  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-581-5274

<http://www.anticoarco.it>

This vine-swathed restaurant attracts foodies with its slightly nouvelle flavors, 400 wines and homemade Sicilian *cassata* for dessert. The seasonal menu is graced by such delights as *spaghetti cacio e pepe con*

*fiori di zucca croccanti* (spaghetti with aged cheese, pepper and fried zucchini flowers), *carpaccio caldo con i carciofi* (sauteed beef served on a bed of artichokes) and *petti di faraona con tartufi* (quail breasts with shredded truffle and a potato tart). The gracious 18th-century building stands on the hill above Trastevere, next to the renowned Bar Gianicolo and the Porta San Pancrazio, a pink and white triumphal arch.

Daily noon till late. Closed for two weeks in August. Reservations should be made a week in advance. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

## La Pariolina

Viale Parioli 93  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-808-6002

<http://www.lapariolina.it>

This modern and stylish eatery specializes in gourmet pizzas—both the Roman thin-crust and the Neapolitan fluffy-crust varieties.

Daily 12:30-3 pm and 7 pm-1 am. Reservations recommended. \$\$.

## La Pergola

Via Cadlolo 101 (located inside the Rome Cavalieri hotel)  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-35091

<http://www.romecavalieri.com/lapergola.php>

This restaurant with three Michelin stars may be one of the grandest in all of Italy, boasting a panoramic view of the city, a mouthwatering menu that changes seasonally and a world-class wine list. Every detail is considered: Flanders linen, fine porcelain and a well-trained waitstaff that works so seamlessly it's been compared to a Russian ballet. Everything is so well done that it's possible for diners to close their eyes and simply point to the menu for an unforgettable choice, but the best option may be to ask the advice of the knowledgeable, friendly and multilingual staff. A five- or seven-course wine tasting menu is offered most nights.

Tuesday-Saturday 7:30-11:30 pm. Reservations must be made at least a month in advance. Dress formally. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

## La Taverna del Ghetto Kasher

Via Portico d'Ottavia 8  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-6880-9771

<http://www.latavernadelghetto.com>

In the heart of the Jewish Quarter, this restaurant serves typical Jewish-Roman dishes. Kosher Italian cuisine is not well-known outside of Italy, but many Romans consider it the best example of the city's culinary traditions. If it's serving *tortino di alicotti all'indivia*, be sure to try it.

Daily except Friday for dinner, Saturday for lunch as well. \$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

## Open Colonna

Scalinata di via Milano 9a (Palazzo delle Esposizioni)  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-4782-2641

<http://www.antonellocolonna.it>

Atop Rome's Palazzo delle Esposizioni off Via Nazionale sits the glass-encased Open Colonna, the Roman location for chef Antonio Colonna, who for years ran one of the most important destination restaurants, a day trip away from Rome. At lunch, the restaurant offers a reasonably priced buffet of well-prepared traditional favorites, and at night the space is transformed into one of the city's most decadent eateries. Reserve at least a week in advance.

Open daily for lunch and dinner (Sunday and Monday for lunch only). Closed in August. \$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

## Osteria Margutta

Via Margutta 82  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-323-1025

<http://www.osteriamargutta.it>

This impossibly romantic restaurant is located on a charming street. The all-red Osteria Margutta serves specialties such as linguine and prawns, tortellini made in-house and baked turbot with potatoes, all in a candlelit setting. Changing art exhibits add to the decor.

Monday-Saturday 12:30-midnight. \$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

## Pizzeria La Montecarlo

Vicolo Savelli 13 (near Piazza Navona)  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-686-1877

<http://www.lamontecarlo.it>

In summer, the alley outside this pizzeria is filled with tables of boisterous Romans. In winter, the crowds move indoors, where the walls display hundreds of photos of Italy's most famous actors, singers, writers and politicians posing with the staff. The service is faster than it is polite, but the pizzas are great, the pasta is some of the best in Rome, and the price is fair for the quality. Start with a plate of *fritti misti*, which includes the most traditional Roman appetizers: fried zucchini flowers with anchovies, *suppli* (rice balls stuffed with mozzarella and tomato, breaded and fried) and *olive ascolane* (fried olives stuffed with pork). Then try the calzone (pizza folded over on itself and filled with ham, cheese and egg) or the best carbonara (pasta in an egg-and-bacon sauce, with lots of black pepper and Parmesan) in Rome. Finally, finish with tiramisu.

Tuesday-Sunday for lunch and dinner. Closed for two weeks in August. \$. No credit cards.

## Pizzeria Panattoni "Ai Marmi"

Viale Trastevere 53-59 (Trastevere)  
Rome, Italy

This pizzeria—probably the best-known in Rome—is commonly called *l'obitorio*, "the morgue," because of its minimalist interior. Rectangular marble tables fill the large, white room. Despite the simple decor, it's packed most nights with lively crowds, often including celebrities. The wood-burning oven is in the corner, so you can watch the hypnotizing pizza-making process.

Thursday-Tuesday for dinner. Reservations not accepted. \$. No credit cards.

## Primo al Pigneto

Via del Pigneto 46  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-701-3827

<http://www.primoalpigneto.it>

From an unlikely location (until recently, Pigneto, just beyond San Giovanni, was an undesirable neighborhood of Rome) emerges one of the city's culinary hot spots, with creative interpretations of classic dishes that change with the seasons. Ask for an outdoor table in the summer to get a feel for the bohemian area.

Tuesday-Saturday for dinner, Sunday for lunch as well. \$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

## Ristorante '34'

Via Mario de Fiori 34 (near the Spanish Steps)  
Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-679-5091

<http://www.ristoranteal34.it>

This small restaurant is tucked between the shops where big-name designers sell handbags and shoes. It serves up first-rate Roman dishes.

Monday 5:30-11 pm and Tuesday-Sunday 12:30 pm-11 pm. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

## Santopadre

Via Collina 18  
Rome, Italy

The after-theater crowd gathers in this restaurant that's both rustic and elegant. Traditional Roman specialties include *il cartoccio vegetale* (seasonal vegetables baked in a bag) and *tagliata di manzo* (aged beef sliced and served on a bed of arugula and tomato wedges). Every Tuesday and Friday, fish selections augment the menu.

Monday-Saturday for dinner. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

## Supplizio

Rome, Italy

<http://Via dei Banchi Vecchi 143>

Literally meaning "torment," the name of this restaurant is a wordplay to recall the *suppli*, a traditional Italian appetizer that the owner loves. The restaurant serves an impressive selection of street food, from pizza to meatballs to potato croquettes, with prices that range 2 euros-10 euros per serving.

Monday-Saturday noon-8 pm. \$-\$\$\$. Phone 06-8987-1920. Via dei Banchi Vecchi 143.

## Taverna Giulia

Vicolo dell'Oro 23

Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-686-9768

<http://www.tavernagiulia.it>

This lovely, comfortable restaurant serves traditional Ligurian food on a quiet street at the north end of beautiful Via Giulia. At the top of the list are the dishes made with Genovese pesto, such as gnocchi and lasagna, as well as the delicate *torta pasqualina*, a vegetable dish with layers of pastry. Creme brulee is a favorite dessert.

Monday-Saturday for lunch and dinner. \$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

## Taverna Trilussa

Via del Politeama 23-25 (Trastevere)

Rome, Italy

**Phone:** 06-581-8918

<http://www.tavernatrilussa.com>

This bustling Trastevere eatery is so Roman that the menu is written in the local dialect (a charmingly translated English-language version is available on request). A mix of Romans and occasional visitors make up the crowd served by an experienced and helpful waitstaff and a menu ranging from traditional pasta and meat dishes to signature local dishes. Try the ravioli mimosa, the taverna's signature dish. Second-course dishes can be made from imported beef, and the *millefoglie* dessert is delicious. There are two wine lists: one focusing on underrated regional bottles, another focusing on the rest of Italy and a few foreign choices.

Monday-Saturday from 7 pm. \$\$-\$\$\$\$. Visa and MasterCard accepted.

## Trattoria Monti

Via di San Vito 13

Rome, Italy

Unpretentious and intimate, this enjoyable trattoria, operated by brothers Enrico and Daniele, features well-prepared and delicate dishes inspired by their native region of Le Marche. Try the delightful Parmesan custard.

Tuesday-Saturday for lunch and dinner, Sunday for lunch only. Closed for two weeks around Easter and Christmas and for the month of August. \$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

## Security Etiquette

Contrary to the relaxed image many have of Italy, the Italian business world emphasizes formality and procedure. Get assistance from a local contact, go through proper channels, and always present yourself and your firm as polished and accomplished.

**Appointments**—Having an intermediary is essential. Without someone to make the appropriate contacts, you'll find it hard to get much done. A go-between can help schedule meetings, which should be set up well in advance. It is very difficult—nearly impossible, in fact—to call on a businessperson unannounced. Confirm your meetings a day or two before they're set to take place. Punctuality is expected throughout the country, but don't be offended if Italian counterparts are not as prompt: Those in the northern part of the country generally are; those in the south are less so.

**Personal Introductions**—Greet others with a handshake, eye contact and a slight nod. Titles are important: Use any professional titles supplied on introduction or, better yet, ask for a list of the participants and their official titles in advance. Use the title and last name—plus the formal third-person address if you speak any Italian—until instructed otherwise. On a social level, Romans often bestow two cheek kisses to friends of friends. Be alert and follow cues.

**Negotiating**—The pace of negotiations is slow, and final decisions are not made by lower-level functionaries. The chain of command in Italian business is both vertical and horizontal, so decision-making can take a long time. Last-minute demands can be made by a person who enters the negotiations late in the game. In fact, this is sometimes used as a negotiating tool. Remain patient and calm at all times.

**Business Entertaining**—Business dinners are common, but will typically involve only a few key players. If you are hosting the dinner, ask your Italian contact whom to invite. Tip the waiter ahead of time and ask that the bill be quietly given to you, should you wish to pay. Otherwise, you will have to request the check; it will not be brought to you automatically.

**Body Language**—Italians typically converse while standing close together. Handshakes can extend longer than in other cultures, and locals tend to gesture when talking. The hand signs are continuous and nuanced, though none are likely to be made by a foreigner inadvertently. More often, visitors start to imitate the gestures without understanding the precise meanings—a practice we'd caution against.

**Gift Giving**—Small but high-quality gifts are appropriate in some situations: Ask your intermediary for advice. Take flowers, chocolates or lavishly wrapped pastries to someone's home. Exercise caution in giving wine: Many Italians are experts; if you're not, select a different gift.

**Conversation**—Very little is off-limits in Italian conversation, but avoid being critical of Italian society and culture, even if your host is. Soccer is a passion and an easy topic (though discussing individual players rather than teams may be safer), as are art, travel and Italian culture. The less-positive side of Italy, including racism charges, Mussolini, World War II, the role of the Church in Italian affairs and the Mafia, is probably better avoided unless you know the other parties well.

## Personal Safety

Rome, like any big city, has its fair share of crime. Fortunately, few incidents involve gangs or violence. Great progress has been made by Rome's mayor to bolster security by installing better lighting and CCTV cameras to diminish petty crime, but it has made those vagrants still out there more aggressive than usual. There are many more police officers patrolling tourist areas than in previous years, but one should still be cautious. The buses that connect to St. Peter's, the Colosseum, the Catacombs and Termini Station are crawling with pickpockets, as are the subway trains.

Don't tempt thieves with flashy, expensive jewelry, dangling or open purses, easily accessible wallets or unlocked cars. Don't leave handbags or backpacks open, and make sure your most valuable possessions are close to your body or back in the hotel safe. Hold on tightly to purses and briefcases, and avoid the side of the sidewalk nearest traffic (purse snatchers sometimes operate from the backs of motorbikes). Avoid fanny packs. They are the mark of a tourist and attract thieves. One favorite trick is for someone to approach with a clipboard or magazine and thrust it in your face. While you are trying to get them to move away an accomplice can open your pack, remove the contents and zip it up again, and you'll be none the wiser until later on. Keep physical contact with your belongings, even when seated at a cafe table or outdoor restaurant (for example, handbags should loop over an ankle or knee, rather than a chair back).

Be alert. Make eye contact with potential pickpockets. Should an incident begin, shout and point while gripping your belongings. Don't be afraid of causing a scene: Locals and transit workers will quickly come to your defense.

*Note:* Street musicians—many of them classically trained Romanians or self-taught Roma—are largely innocent of such scams. Many support large families. Locals consider it *bella figura* (good style) to donate spare change to talented buskers and sincerely needy beggars.

Be wary of fast-talking "guides" or "hotel representatives" in the train station or at tourist sites. They are either swindlers or serving as a diversion as another crook strips you of your possessions. You can appeal to the police if there is a dispute over the price for any type of service. Changes to the taxi charter have put caps on prices, so be sure you check the printed price list or ask for an estimated price before entering the cab.

A small percentage of Roman soccer fans are apt to become violent, but there is increasing violence by fans of visiting teams, especially England. Be attentive to which team the people around you support. Serious incidents are extremely rare, but it's better to stay on the safe side. Sporting the wrong jersey, or even wearing the wrong colors, can sometimes lead to problems. As a rule, it's advisable to leave the stadium early.

Women may endure more attention than at home. Flattering comments such as "*bellissima*" (most beautiful) are culturally acceptable—touching is not. Scream and slap; most Romans will leap to your aid.

In Rome, there are four different law-enforcement organizations: the city police, *polizia municipale* (in blue and white); the state police, *polizia di stato* (also in blue and white); the paramilitary police, *carabinieri* (in designer black and red); and the finance police, *guardia di finanza* (in brown and green). Although each has a specialization, they all cover the same jurisdiction. Appeal to any of them, regardless of the problem. All four types tend to speak at least basic English and are eager to ensure that tourists are not cheated (after all, tourism is Rome's biggest business). Finally, do not be alarmed by machine guns at the airport or in the hands of traffic cops: The heavy weaponry is routine.



In an emergency, phone 113 for the police, 115 for fire and 118 for medical assistance. For the latest information on travel safety, contact your country's travel-advisory agency.

## Health

Italian health care is part of a socialized medicine system. Italians carry health cards that allow them free health care and subsidized prescription pharmaceuticals. But there are still a number of private care options to support Rome's large expat population, with several United Nations organizations and embassies to the Holy See and the country of Italy. Emergency services are free to residents and nonresidents alike.

No hospitals or clinics accept foreign insurance claims, but most will be able to write a receipt for services that is in compliance with international insurance companies. Walk-in emergency rooms, called Pronto Soccorso, are located in hospitals throughout the city. Patients are treated in order based on the seriousness of the injury or ailment, so it is not uncommon to wait several hours for a nonemergency complaint just to get bumped by someone with a broken limb. Some emergency rooms are filthy, and many are understaffed, but health care is generally good.

The Aventino Medical Group is a cooperative of English-speaking private doctors who can help in almost any nonemergency situation during regular office hours and who can direct foreign travelers to the best hospital or clinic for emergencies. Phone 06-578-0738. <http://www.aventinomedicalgroup.com>.

Medical facilities are generally very good, and the water, although heavily chlorinated with high levels of calcium, is safe to drink. Many locals stick to bottled mineral water, but it's a matter of preference—the tap water is fine. Rome can get particularly hot in summer—carrying a bottle of water can help prevent dehydration. Refills from the street nozzles are perfectly safe, but keep out of the fountains. Also, as everywhere, take your most comfortable pair of walking shoes, as Rome is a city best seen on foot.

Most pharmacies are open Monday-Friday 8:30 am-1 pm and 3:30-7 pm. They rotate night and weekend duty (7 pm-8:30 am), publishing the schedule daily in the local sections of newspapers, such as // *Messaggero* or *La Repubblica*. Many also post the address of the nearest open pharmacy in the area. During the middle weeks of August, only one pharmacy is generally open in each district.

Pharmacists can sometimes aid travelers with basic prescriptions such as birth-control refills or remedies for minor ailments. All medicine is kept behind the counter, so it helps to know the Italian name for your malady.

The two main hospitals in the city center are Policlinico Umberto I, located on Viale del Policlinico close to the Policlinico metro stop on the B line (phone 06-49971; <http://www.policlinicoumberto1.it>), and Ospedale San Giovanni-Addolorata, located on Via dell'Amba Aradam 9 (phone 06-77051; <http://www.hsangiovanni.roma.it>).

For more information, contact your country's health-advisory agency.

## Disabled Advisory

As an ancient city with limited vehicle access, Rome can be difficult for disabled travelers to navigate. Because of city budget cuts, little has been done in recent years to improve the situation, and Italy has been fined by the European Union for noncompliance with measures to serve disabled visitors and residents.

The public-transit system and the train system both have special services for the disabled, but trams are the only sure bet. Otherwise, transportation must be reserved at least 24 hours in advance (a week ahead is best). There is an office at Termini Station, open daily 6:45 am-9:30 pm, that offers information on services for the disabled and helps to make special arrangements if contacted in advance. Phone 199-303-060. <http://www.rfi.it/cms/v/index.jsp?vgnextoid=2ba9a6df2743f210VgnVCM1000008916f90aRCRD>.

For up-to-date information on accessibility for trams, buses and subways, call ATAC Monday-Saturday 8 am-8 pm. Toll-free 06-57003. <http://www.trenitalia.it> or <http://www.atac.roma.it>.

Roma per Tutti is a service aimed at improving access in Rome. The website (only in Italian) has a full list of wheelchair-accessible venues and invites readers to report those that are particularly prohibitive. <http://www.romapertutti.it>.

Clubs and restaurants are also becoming more aware of access issues. Most restaurants do not have wheelchair-accessible lavatories or adequate space for wheelchairs users to navigate.

## Facts

### Dos & Don'ts

Do pack a good insect repellent. Large tiger mosquitoes from Asia do not carry diseases, but they do plague the city in the summer months.

Don't bathe in the city's fountains. They are considered monuments, and you will risk being arrested or fined.

Don't snack close to monuments or historical sites in the city center. You could be fined if caught. Police regularly patrol the Spanish Steps to shoo away anyone with food.

Do order a pizza with ham and figs or potatoes and rosemary—popular, traditional Roman snacks.

Don't expect to eat dinner in a local restaurant before 7:30 or 8 pm, and lunch is rarely served before 12:30 or 1 pm.

Do take time to admire the cobbled streets in the city center. Many of the city center's main traffic streets have already been paved with asphalt, but there is little chance they will disappear entirely. Do not steal cobblestones, even if they are stacked up in a pile. You could be fined.

Don't forget to look up when walking down Rome's quaint streets. Many old buildings have remnants of frescoes and original statues on the facades. And you might see wonderful Roman faces people-watching from the windows.

Do spend some time walking along the Via Appia, The Appian Way. There is a section, a short bus journey away from the city center, that has been restored and is virtually a pedestrian zone. This was one of the first of the Roman roads.

Don't trust pedestrian crosswalks. Most Romans ignore them, even when they are below yellow flashing lights. Crossing busy streets in Rome is daunting and dangerous.

Don't expect to hail a taxi from the street. Cabs are found at marked ranks throughout the city.

## Geostats

**Passport/Visa Requirements:** Citizens of Canada and the U.S. need only a passport. Check travel document requirements with your carrier before departing.

**Population:** 2,753,000.

**Languages:** Italian. English is widely spoken—if not perfectly, at least enough to communicate basic information.

**Predominant Religions:** Christian (Roman Catholic).

**Time Zone:** 1 hour ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (+1 GMT). Daylight Saving Time is observed from the last Sunday in March to the last Sunday in October.

**Voltage Requirements:** 220 volts.

**Telephone Codes:** 39, country code; 06,city code;

## Money

### Taxes

Hotels in Rome now charge an occupancy tax of 3 euros for one- to two-star hotels, 4 euros for three-star, 6 euros for four-star and 7 euros for five-star hotels per night.

A value-added tax (VAT, or IVA in Italy) of 22% can be refunded to non-European Union visitors. The amount added varies from country to country within the EU, and not all stores participate. Check first or look for the sign in the store window. In addition, only luxury goods—such as clothing and wine—are eligible. Refunds usually amount to about 13%-16% of the purchase price. Make sure you get the paperwork at the store on the day of purchase. Most stores will not provide the necessary document retroactively.

Present three things to the refund officer at the airport before departure: your purchase, the receipt and the customs division's stamped refund form (which must be picked up at the place of purchase). Without these, your refund will be denied. Note that only unused articles are eligible for a refund: If the article looks used, you won't get your money back. If everything is in order, the IVA refund officer will give you a final form to be mailed. (Ideally, jump through all these hoops before checking your bags, and have your purchases in an easy-to-reach place.)

Some larger stores have a streamlined process: They handle most of the paperwork and then mail the refund to you, usually minus a fee. Private IVA refund services, located at the airport, also pay immediately minus a fee, usually a percentage of the refund. This is also possible at refund centers in the

shopping district of Rome's Centro Storico and other large Italian cities. The two largest such services are Global Blue and Cashback; you'll see their signs in store windows. For more information, check Global Blue's website. It provides information, a tax calculator and a location map, showing its refund offices in 34 countries and all major exit points in Italy (airports, harbors and roads). <http://www.globalblue.com>.

## Tipping

The culture of tipping in Europe is considerably different from that in North America. For the most part, Italians do not tip, as waiters and housekeeping staff are paid a fair wage. At times a service charge (*servizio*) is tacked onto restaurant bills. Don't confuse this with the cover (*coperto*), which is a charge for bread and table settings. If the service charge is included, a tip is not necessary. If service has been excellent, a tip of 1 euro per person is greatly appreciated and should be given directly to the waitstaff, not tacked on the credit card amount.

Tipping in taxis is increasingly expected because the city of Rome has regulated taxi fares and increased the number of taxi licenses, increasing competition among drivers. Most people add a 5% tip to taxi fares.

## Weather

May and June are the best times to visit, as far as the weather goes. Spring weather can be quite changeable, especially in March and April, with sunny skies in the morning and storms in the afternoon. May and June can be very pleasant, but temperatures often climb above 85 F/30 C in July and August. High humidity (around 85%) causes most locals to flee the city toward the end of summer. Fall remains sunny, with October and November mild but sometimes rainy. September-November is a nice time to visit—the weather's good for touring around, and you'll miss the early-summer crowds. Winters are generally mild, with January lows around 40 F/5 C. Rome receives snow about once every five years, and when it does, public transport tends to stop, and getting around the city can be difficult.

## What to Wear

As a rule, Italians are very conscious about clothes and fabric, and they have a highly developed sense of style from a very young age. Casual dress is fine for most occasions, but a suit and tie are recommended for business meetings. Jackets for men and smart attire for women are wise for dining out. The only locals in shorts and T-shirts are construction workers or people playing soccer in the park; women rarely wear shorts. Short shorts or "Daisy Dukes" are never acceptable streetwear. Bare feet are taboo except at the seaside or swimming pools.

When visiting the Vatican or any major cathedral, men should wear long pants and women should wear skirts or long pants. Sleeveless shirts and shorts are not permitted in churches or the Vatican, including the Vatican museums. Use a large scarf to cover exposed shoulders if no other covering is available.

## Sorrento, Italy

### Overview

#### Introduction

With a dramatic cliff-top setting along the rugged Sorrentine Peninsula, Sorrento has been noted for its beauty since ancient times, when Greek ships sailed past, and later by the Romans who called the city Surrentum. Travelers today find the same remarkable views sweeping across the Bay of Naples to Mount Vesuvius, along with a lively southern Italian resort atmosphere.



The bustling Piazza Tasso is the heart of Sorrento. Corso Italia runs through the piazza and is lined with shops and restaurants on both sides. Escape the traffic and chaos of Piazza Tasso by wandering in Sorrento's historic district, which is located between Corso Italia and the Villa Comunale park that overlooks the cliffs of Sorrento. A grid of medieval streets, the historic center is Sorrento's most charming area. Via San Cesareo is a great spot for excellent restaurants and shops selling local specialties such as limoncello. Many shops sell beautiful intarsia, or inlaid woodworking, in the form of music boxes, furniture and decorative items.

From the top of the cliff in the center of Sorrento, follow the road down to Marina Grande, which is Sorrento's smaller and much more picturesque port. Colorful buildings and restaurants sit alongside the water, where you can dine overlooking the sea surrounded by a small fishing village scene.

Sorrento is ideally situated for exploring the Sorrentine Peninsula, including the Amalfi Coast, as well the nearby island of Capri, the archaeological sites of ancient Pompeii and Herculaneum, and the vibrant and fascinating city of Naples.

### Highlights

**Sights**—Cathedral of Sorrento; Piazza Tasso; the charming fishing village atmosphere of the Marina Grande.

**Museums**—Museo Correale di Terranova; Museobottega della Tarsialigna.

**Memorable Meals**—The traditional *gnocchi alla sorrentina* (potato dumplings baked with a tomato sauce, mozzarella and basil); tasting freshly made mozzarella at Caseificio Michaelangelo; the *delizia al limone* dessert, invented in Sorrento.

**Especially for Kids**—Exploring the lemon groves at the Giardini di Cataldo; swimming at Spiaggia San Francesco; boat excursions along the Sorrentine Peninsula.

## Port Information

### Location

Cruise ships anchor near Sorrento and tender passengers to the Marina Piccola port. Sorrento is a charming town that is worth visiting for at least an hour, but is also an important departure point for nearby destinations such as Capri, Naples, Pompeii and the Amalfi Coast. Although the names are deceptive, Sorrento's Marina Piccola ("small marina") is actually the larger port where cruise ships tender and ferries arrive and depart. The smaller and more picturesque port in Sorrento is called Marina Grande (large marina), which has retained the feel of a small fishing village.

There is little in terms of shopping and dining options in Marina Piccola—the center of Sorrento is located quite a steep walk and climb up a staircase from Piazza Tasso. To get from the port to the town center, walk or take a bus. The EAV local bus service has a line that connects Marina Piccola with Piazza Tasso and on to the Circumvesuviana train station near Piazza de Curtis.

From the Circumvesuviana train station, trains leave for Naples with stops in Pompeii and Herculaneum. Buses also depart from nearby the train station at Piazza de Curtis and stop at various places along the Amalfi Coast. Be aware that during peak tourism season, the public buses can be crowded and roads can get congested.

From Marina Piccola, take a ferry from Sorrento to Capri, Naples and Ischia. During the summer season there are ferry departures for the Amalfi Coast towns of Positano and Amalfi.

It is also possible to hire a taxi to destinations along the Amalfi Coast or to rent a car.

## See & Do

### Sightseeing

Sorrento's main sights are all located within walking distance of Piazza Tasso. The historic center still has a medieval atmosphere that is fun to explore. Take in the spectacular views across the Bay of Naples from the Villa Comunale park before heading down to Marina Grande, where colorful fishing boats bob in the port surrounded by restaurants with outdoor terraces perfect for lunch or dinner with a view.

For an artistic break, explore the aristocratic villa and art collection of the Correale family at the Museo Correale di Terranova. The museum displays a fine collection of paintings and decorative arts from the 17th and 18th centuries, and boasts fine views of the bay and nearby lemon groves.

Noted as a center of intarsia (inlaid woodwork) production since the 18th century, the Museobottega della Tarsialigna showcases marvelous examples of intarsia created over the centuries by Sorrento's craftsmen. The Cathedral of Sorrento is also worth a visit to see incredible intarsia work, especially its wooden choir stalls and beautiful doors.

## Historic Sites

### Marina Grande

The small port of Marina Grande is one of the most picturesque spots in Sorrento. Brightly colored fishing boats bob up and down in the water, and the atmosphere feels worlds away from the hustle and bustle of Piazza Tasso. There are many restaurants to choose from and a small swimming area.

## Piazza Tasso

This busy piazza is at the heart of Sorrento, where Corso Italia crosses Via Fuorimura. Traffic is hectic until the evenings, when Corso Italia becomes pedestrian-only and the area is the place to see and be seen during the evening *passeggiata* (walk), preferably while enjoying a gelato. Cafes and restaurants surrounding the piazza are excellent places to sit back and watch daily life in Sorrento pass by. The Marina Piccola port is located below Piazza Tasso and is reached by a steep road.

## Sedile Dominova

Largo Dominova  
Sorrento, Italy

Located along Via San Cesareo in the historic center, this unusual domed building is a rare example of a noble meeting hall built at the beginning of the 16th century. Today it is a private men's club and access to the interior is restricted; however, you can see the beautifully frescoed 18th-century ceiling from the street.

## Museums

### Museobottega della Tarsialigna

Via San Nicola 28  
Sorrento, Italy

**Phone:** 81-877-1942

<http://www.museomuta.it>

For a glimpse into the true artistry of Sorrento's traditional intarsia woodworking, visit this small museum. Set in Palazzo Pomarici Santomasi, a historic building in the area where many of the artisan woodworking studios were once located, the collection spans from antique to contemporary pieces.

Daily 10 am-5 pm (until 6:30 pm April-October). 8 euros adults.

### Museo Correale di Terranova

Via Correale 50  
Sorrento, Italy

**Phone:** 81-878-1846

<http://www.museocorreale.it>

Housed in the beautiful villa of the Correale family, one of Sorrento's oldest noble families, this museum opened in 1924 when Pompeo and Alfredo Correale donated their extensive collection of 16th- to 18th-century paintings and decorative art to the city.

Tuesday-Saturday 9:30 am-6:30 pm, Sunday 9:30 am-1:30 pm. 8 euros.

## Nature

### Giardini di Cataldo

Via Correale 27  
Sorrento, Italy

**Phone:** 81-878-1888

<http://www.igiardinidicataldo.it>

Located just north of Corso Italia on Via Correale, this family-run lemon grove has a lovely shop with gelato and limoncello. Stroll through the garden for free and sample some of the local specialties. Tours of the factory and grove are available March-October, Monday-Friday at 11 am and 4 pm.

8 euros.

## Parks & Gardens

### Villa Comunale

Near Piazza Sant'Antonio, overlooking the bay  
Sorrento, Italy

This small public park is most notable for its stunning view of the Bay of Naples all the way across to Mount Vesuvius. From the edge, the cliff drops down to the sea with the port and swimming area of Spiaggia San Francesco below.

Daily 8 am-10 pm (until midnight April-October).

## Religious Sites

### Cathedral of Sorrento

Via Santa Maria della Pietà 44  
Sorrento, Italy

**Phone:** 81-878-2248

<http://www.cattedralesorrento.it>

Located just steps off of Corso Italia, the Cathedral of Sorrento is a peaceful spot. A veritable museum of intarsia, there are plenty of examples of incredible craftsmanship in the elaborate inlaid doors, choir stalls and the Stations of the Cross.

Daily 8 am-noon and 5-8 pm.

### Cloister of San Francisco

Piazza Francesco Saverio Gargiulo  
Sorrento, Italy

This photogenic cloister is located near Villa Comunale. Dating from the 14th century, the eclectic mix of curved and crossed arches reflects medieval Sorrento's blend of architectural styles. The cloister is a popular spot for concerts and wedding ceremonies.

Daily 8 am-1 pm and 2-8 pm.

## Shopping

As a popular tourist destination, Sorrento has no short supply of shops to choose from along Corso Italia, the main street. Shoppers can expect a mix of the typical touristy shops and more traditional options where the locals shop. As Sorrento is the largest city along the Sorrentine Peninsula, it is also a popular shopping area for residents in the smaller towns and villages. The key is to take time to find the treasures, as there are many fine shops.

The historic center, especially Via San Cesareo, is an interesting shopping area to explore given the characteristic medieval atmosphere and the noble buildings. The streets are lined with shops selling



traditional products such as limoncello and handmade leather sandals and shoes. Sorrento is traditionally known for intricately carved intarsia, or inlaid woodwork, which can be found in many shops and in a delightful variety, with everything from music boxes to incredibly detailed tables and furniture.

**Shopping Hours:** Generally, shops are open daily 9 am-9 pm; in winter, they typically close for lunch 1-4 pm. Most stores close on Sunday in the winter, except for around the Christmas holiday.

## Specialty Stores

### A. Gargiulo & Jannuzzi

Viale Enrico Caruso at Piazza Tasso  
Sorrento, Italy

**Phone:** 81-878-1041

<http://www.gargiulo-jannuzzi.it>

With a beautiful showroom, this shop has a large selection of high-quality inlaid woodwork, including furniture, chess sets, decorative pieces and beautiful music boxes that play traditional Neapolitan songs.

Daily 9:30 am-10 pm.

### Bottega del Gioiello

Corso Italia 179/181  
Sorrento, Italy

**Phone:** 81-878-5419

<http://bottegedelgioiello.it>

Located along Corso Italia east of Piazza Tasso, this family-run jewelry store has a fine selection of jewelry and watches with friendly customer service.

Daily 10 am-10 pm.

### Carthusia

Corso Italia 177  
Sorrento, Italy

**Phone:** 81-807-5549

<http://www.carthusia.it>

Capri's famous Carthusia perfume company has an exquisite boutique in Sorrento, which is ideal for travelers who may not make it to the larger shop and factory on Capri.

Daily 9:30 am-10 pm.

### Gargiulo Inlaid

Via Fuoro 33  
Sorrento, Italy

**Phone:** 81-878-2420

<http://www.gargiuloinlaid.it>

For an intimate look at Sorrento's artisan woodworking tradition, visit this family-run establishment created by Salvatore Gargiulo. The jewelry boxes with hidden compartments are particularly fine.

Daily 9:30 am-9 pm.

## La Conchiglia

Via Fuoro 29  
Sorrento, Italy

**Phone:** 81-877-4605

<http://www.sandalilaconchiglia.it>

Easy to spot with rainbow colors of sandals decorating the wall outside the shop, La Conchiglia is the best place for custom sandals made to fit your feet by owner Mario Cavaliere. Prices are surprising affordable.

Daily 9:30 am-10 pm.

## Limonoro

Via San Cesareo 49/53  
Sorrento, Italy

This glimmering shop is a dream for lemon lovers, with displays of limoncello, candy, chocolate and more—all infused with Sorrento's unique variety of lemons. Try the cream limoncello, too.

Daily 9 am-11 pm.

## Itinerary

### Local Tours

#### Acampora Travel

Via del Mare 22  
Sorrento, Italy

**Phone:** 81-532-9711

<http://www.acamporatravel.it>

This full-service tour operator offers private and group excursions in Sorrento and the surrounding area, including the Amalfi Coast, Capri, Ischia, Procida, Naples, Pompeii, Mount Vesuvius, Herculaneum and more.

Group tours start at 32 euros per person.

## Caseificio Michelangelo

Via delle Rose 91  
Sorrento, Italy

**Phone:** 338-214-2766

<http://www.caseificiomichelangelo.com>

Located in the hills of Piano di Sorrento, the Caseificio Michelangelo is a family-run cheese factory that offers tastings and mozzarella-making demonstrations. Learn the steps for creating the famous mozzarella, see how the traditional *caciocavallo* cheese is seasoned and enjoy samples of the classic cheeses of the Sorrentine Peninsula. Free pick-up and drop-off available for individuals from accommodations in the center of Sorrento.

## CitySightseeing

Sorrento, Italy

**Phone:** 81-877-4707

<http://www.sorrento.city-sightseeing.it>

The bright red CitySightseeing buses are an excellent way to explore Sorrento and travel to Positano and Amalfi on the Amalfi Coast. More comfortable than the packed local SITA buses, CitySightseeing offers two routes: One hop-on, hop-off route stops in four places in central Sorrento as well as other towns along the Sorrento Peninsula, including Massa Lubrense, Termini and Sant'Agata dei Due Golfi. The Sorrento Coast to Coast route connects Sorrento with Positano and Amalfi. Tickets are 12 euros for the hop-on, hop-off Sorrento route and 10 euros per trip for the Sorrento to Amalfi Coast route. Tickets can conveniently be purchased upon boarding, and audio commentary is provided.

Buses depart from Piazza de Curtis in Sorrento for the Amalfi Coast every hour 8:45 am-5:45 pm. .

## Dining

### Dining Overview

As a busy and popular travel destination, Sorrento has a large selection of restaurants, with many admittedly geared towards tourists—but that doesn't mean that fine dining options aren't available. Whether a simple trattoria-style meal or Michelin-starred fine dining, there are excellent options in Sorrento's dining scene.

Located just across the bay from Naples, the cuisine of the Sorrentine Peninsula reflects Neapolitan cooking, including an emphasis on fresh seafood. Neapolitan-style pizza is excellent in Sorrento, and it is available in many restaurants, not just pizzerias. For a taste of local flavors, try the *gnocchi alla sorrentina*, potato dumplings baked with a tomato sauce and mozzarella, topped with basil.

The Sorrentine Peninsula is famous for its lemons, and their tart flavor accents many of the local dishes. They are also used to create the brilliant yellow limoncello liqueur that is often served at the end of meals. Although popular all over the Sorrentine Peninsula, the traditional *delizia al limone* dessert was invented by a chef in Sorrento. A delicate sponge cake filled and topped with a luscious lemon cream, it's the perfect end to a meal in Sorrento.

Here are some general guidelines for what you can expect to pay in Sorrento for a dinner for one, excluding drinks, tax and tip: \$ = less than 15 euros; \$\$ = 15 euros-30 euros; \$\$\$ = 31 euros-45 euros; \$\$\$\$ = more than 45 euros.

## Local & Regional

### Aurora Light

Piazza Tasso 10/11

Sorrento, Italy

**Phone:** 81-877-2631

<http://www.auroralight.it>

This restaurant in Piazza Tasso offers light fare, including lovely salads, seafood and seasonal vegetables—there is a wide variety of vegetarian options.

Daily for lunch and dinner. Generally closed January and February. \$-\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

## Bagni il Delfino

Via Marina Grande 216  
Sorrento, Italy

With both indoor and outdoor dining in Sorrento's charming Marina Grande, this restaurant and *stabilimento balneare* has excellent views and the freshest seafood. Try the spaghetti with *frutti di mare* (mixed shellfish) or the traditional *gnocchi alla sorrentina*. Beach service is also available.

Daily for lunch and dinner. Generally closed November-March. \$-\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

## Da Emilia

Via Marina Grande 62  
Sorrento, Italy

**Phone:** 81-807-2720

<http://www.daemilia.it>

Located in picturesque Marina Grande, this family-run restaurant is a great choice for simple seafood dishes in a casual environment. Try a saute of fresh mussels or the classic spaghetti *con le vongole* (spaghetti with clams).

Wednesday-Monday for lunch and dinner. Generally closed November-February. \$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

## Don Alfonso 1890

Corso Sant'Agata 11/13  
Sorrento, Italy

**Phone:** 81-878-0026

<http://www.donalfonso.com>

Located in the mountains above Sorrento, this two-Michelin-star restaurant is one of Sorrento's most exquisite dining experiences. Created by top chef Alfonso Iaccarino, the restaurant is a family affair, involving his wife, Livia, and their sons, Ernesto and Mario, in the kitchen and the dining room.

Wednesday-Sunday for lunch and dinner. Closed November-March. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$.  
Most major credit cards.

## Fauno Bar

Piazza Tasso 13/15  
Sorrento, Italy

**Phone:** 81-877-1135

<http://faunobar.it>

Situated right on Piazza Tasso, Fauno is a local institution. Sit back and watch daily life in Sorrento from the outdoor terrace. This is a great choice for drinks or a light meal. Gluten-free and vegetarian menus available.

Daily 8 am-midnight. Closed in November. \$-\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

## Il Buco

2-A Rampa Marina Piccola 5  
Sorrento, Italy

**Phone:** 81-878-2354

<http://www.ilbucoristorante.it>

Sorrento's finest dining is found right off the pretty Piazza Sant'Antonino at the Michelin-starred Il Buco restaurant. Using ingredients sourced from the Sorrentine Peninsula, the menu focuses on fresh seafood and seasonal ingredients. The tasting menus are excellent, and the cellar has an extensive wine selection.

Thursday-Tuesday for lunch and dinner. Generally closed January and February. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

## La Fenice

Via degli Aranci 11  
Sorrento, Italy

**Phone:** 081-878-1652

<http://www.ristorantelafenicesorrento.com>

This is a good place to get fresh fish and other traditional Neapolitan-style dishes. The grilled fish is a specialty, and gluten-free options are available.

Tuesday-Sunday for lunch and dinner. \$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

## La Marinella

Piazzetta Marinella 12  
Sorrento, Italy

**Phone:** 81-807-5674

<http://www.lamarinellasorrento.com>

For outstanding views of the Bay of Naples, this waterfront restaurant just east of Sorrento in Sant'Agnello is the spot. Accessed by private elevator, the menu highlights seafood with a contemporary flair. Arrive just before sunset for a stellar view during dinner.

Tuesday-Sunday for lunch and dinner. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

## Raki

Via San Cesareo 48  
Sorrento, Italy

Sorrento has no shortage of gelato shops, but Raki is a local favorite. Made with artisan attention to detail and fine ingredients, the flavors include classics as well as some creative combinations to try. Flavors change seasonally, but the fig and almond are excellent choices. Gluten-free cones are available.

Daily 10:30 am-midnight. \$.

## Messina, Sicily Island

### Overview

#### Introduction

The third largest settlement on the island of Sicily, Messina is an interesting mixture of old and new architecture, as much of the city had to be rebuilt following earthquakes in the 19th and 20th centuries. Be sure to visit the Piazza del Duomo to see Orologio Astronomico, the world's largest astronomical clock.

#### Port Information

#### Location

Messina is a city with a busy port that functions as a gateway for nearby Sicilian destinations. Ships dock half a block from the town center, the Piazza del Duomo, and the train station is only a 10-minute walk from the port. Many people choose to take a train to Taormina or Palermo.



### See & Do

#### Sightseeing

#### Nature

#### Parco Fluviale dell'Alcantara

Parco Botanico e Geologico, Via Nazionale 5, Motta Camastra  
Messina, Sicily Island, Italy

**Phone:** 0942-985-010

<http://www.parcoalcantara.it>

This fantastic park is a perfect complement to a tour of Mount Etna, and a visit is often combined with half-day trekking tours to the volcano. The gorges were formed by a lava flow from Mount Etna thousands of years ago—today, particularly in the summer, the crystal clear, icy cold waters of the Alcantara River are the perfect place to cool off. The park offers outdoor activities such as body rafting, trekking and guided tours through the botanic gardens and geological park. There's also a 4-D multimedia show and the MOL (Museum of Land), as well as a tour through the nearby Museo Contadino del Parco (agricultural museum).

Daily 9 am-dusk. 7 euros for the lift down to the park. There's a free public entrance just past the lift entrance, but you must climb down 200 steps (and back up). Guided tours and recreational activities may cost extra.

#### Parco Regionale dei Nebrodi

Strada Nazionale, Cesaro (park office; maps and information are available there)  
Messina, Sicily Island, Italy

Phone: 095-696-008

<http://www.parcodinebrodi.it>

This is Sicily's largest park, covering about 330 sq mi/855 sq km in the northeast part of the island. It features Europe's largest remaining beech forest, sparkling lakes and spectacular views of Mount Etna, which is just southeast of the park. The Nebrodi park offers trekking, orienteering, mountaineering, opportunities for landscape photography, and birdwatching (particularly the rare griffon vulture—for more information, see <http://www.ambientesicilia.it>). Popular trekking excursions cover Alcara Li Fusi, Galati, Longi and Mistretta.

Also inside the park are the historical farmlands, mansion and gardens originally given to Admiral Lord Horatio Nelson by Spanish king Ferdinando III. The property is open to the public and has an extensive museum.

Daily 7 am-7:30 pm.

## Haifa, Israel

### Overview

#### Introduction

Haifa, one of Israel's largest cities, is built on the slopes of Mount Carmel, overlooking the Mediterranean. Its sloping streets and boulevards wind up and down the mountain. Although Haifa sometimes gets a bad rap because of its large industrial areas, visitors will find plenty of fascinating things to see and do in this port city.

The golden dome of the Baha'i Shrine, situated on the slopes of Mount Carmel with a stunning view over the sea, is an immediate eye-catcher from any part of the city (Haifa is the world headquarters of the Baha'i faith). Haifa is also the site of Elijah's cave, held sacred by Christians, Jews and Muslims alike.



#### Geography

Haifa is a highly industrialized, busy port, and the most important one in Israel. It lies to the north of Mount Carmel, facing the Mediterranean Sea. Haifa spans 64 sq mi/165 sq km and is located about 50 mi/80 km north of Tel Aviv.

The city has a population of more than 8 million people. Jews constitute more than 90% of the city's population, while the remaining 10% includes Arab Christians and Muslims.

#### History

Although the city is not mentioned in the Bible, Haifa has a strong Jewish community and finds a place in the ancient Talmudic literature. Byzantine tradition claims that Elijah the Prophet hid in a cave located there to save himself from the wrath of King Ahab. The site is known as Elijah's Cave and is a revered spot for Jews, Christians and Muslims.

Several relics found in the city date back to the Stone Age, and some belong to the more recent Ottoman period. It was during the Middle Ages that the Jewish settlement prospered, and the city flourished as a busy port. However, this prosperous period did not last very long: In 1099, the Crusaders seized the city and slaughtered its inhabitants. Over the years, power passed from the hands of the Mamluks to the Turks and the British Empire. Today, the city is relatively peaceful, though there is some underlying tension that lingers.

## Port Information

### Location

Haifa's modern cruise terminal, which contains a duty-free shop and a cafe, is located in the heart of the city. The train station is a two-minute walk from the terminal, but be sure to wear comfortable shoes, as the city is very hilly. Most visitors use Haifa as a jumping-off point for Tel Aviv (75 minutes away by train) or Akko (30 minutes away).

The Carmelit is an underground metro that connects Haifa's three city centers: downtown, Hadar and Carmel. One end of the Carmelit is close to the cruise terminal.

Taxis wait by the port or can be hired outside large hotels.

## See & Do

### Sightseeing

Haifa is a culturally significant city with ties to a number of faiths, including Judaism, Baha'i, Christianity and Islam. Its rich history and strong industry are evident throughout the city.

In addition to religious and historical sites, Haifa is also home to several stunning beaches and a sprawling nature reserve that surrounds Mount Carmel. Visitors can easily enjoy a day of swimming, hiking or horseback riding close to the city center.

## Historic Sites

### Stella Maris Monastery

Stella Maris Road  
Haifa, Israel

**Phone:** 4-833-7758

[http://www.visit-haifa.org/eng/Stella\\_Maris\\_Church](http://www.visit-haifa.org/eng/Stella_Maris_Church)

This Carmelite monastery houses a collection of paintings and stained-glass windows, as well as a small museum on the order's history.

Daily 8:30 am-noon and 3-6 pm. Free admission.

### The Baha'i Gardens

45 Yefe Nof (tour entrance)  
Haifa, Israel

**Phone:** 4-831-3131

<http://www.ganbahai.org.il>



Haifa is the world headquarters of the Baha'i faith, but no matter your religious affiliation, the stunning shrine and gardens perched on the side of Mount Carmel are certainly worth a visit. The gardens comprise a staircase of 19 terraces that lead up to the iconic gold-domed shrine at the top. The view over the port and the Mediterranean Sea is spectacular. The shrine draws the sect's followers, who are expected to make a pilgrimage there at least once. Guided tours in English are available at varying times throughout the week; see the website for a current schedule.

Daily 9 am-5 pm.

## The Dagon Collection

Dagon Silo  
Haifa, Israel

**Phone:** 4-835-5440

<http://www.museumsinisrael.gov.il/en/museums/Pages/dagon.aspx>

This archaeological collection spans the city's history of processing grain. The display includes ancient Egyptian wall paintings and pottery figures.

## The Hospitaller Fortress

1 Weizmann St.  
Haifa, Israel

**Phone:** 4-995-6706

<http://www.akko.org.il>

This ancient fort has curved arches and comprises four sections that surround a courtyard. It also housed knights' quarters and a hospital within the premises when the fort was in use.

## Museums

### Haifa City Museum

11 Ben Gurion Ave.  
Haifa, Israel

This museum contains exhibits on archaeological excavations of the city and its vicinity, as well as collections of modern and classical art

### Haifa Museum of Art

26 Shabbetai Levi St.  
Haifa, Israel

The art collection in this museum includes more than 7,500 pieces by Israeli and international artists. There are two sections: one exclusively for paintings, and one for sculptures.

### National Maritime Museum

198 Allenby Road  
Haifa, Israel

**Phone:** 4-853-6622

<http://www.nmm.org.il>

The museum displays an amazing range of exhibits relating to the sea, including underwater archeology, maritime art and mythology, anchors and maritime instruments. It charts 5,000 years of maritime adventure involving the Jewish people.

### Reuben Hecht Museum

University of Haifa  
Haifa, Israel

**Phone:** 4-825-7773

<http://mushecht.haifa.ac.il>

Phoenician artifacts and several other archaeological finds are on display at this museum. It also houses a variety of art, including French and Israeli paintings, and the famous Ghez collection, comprising works of art by people who perished in the Holocaust.

### Tikotin Museum of Japanese Art

89 Hanassi Ave.  
Haifa, Israel

**Phone:** 4-838-3554

<http://www.tmja.org.il>

This museum contains several thousand exhibits highlighting Japanese art from the 1600s to the present. The building itself is a lovely example of Japanese-style architecture.

Sunday-Thursday 10 am-7 pm, Friday 10 am-1 pm, Saturday 10 am-3 pm. 35 NIS adults.

## Nature

### Carmel Hai-Bar Nature Reserve

672 Haifa-Isfiya Road  
Haifa, Israel

**Phone:** 4-832-0648

[http://www.visit-haifa.org/eng/Hai-Bar\\_Nature\\_Reserve](http://www.visit-haifa.org/eng/Hai-Bar_Nature_Reserve)

The park spreads over an area of 1,500 acres/607 hectares. It is part of a larger forest reserve and is home to rehabilitated animals such as roe deer, panthers, vultures, falcons and owls.

### Mount Carmel and Carmel Forest

Mount Carmel  
Haifa, Israel

[http://www.goisrael.com/Tourism\\_Eng/Tourist%20Information/Discover%20Israel/Geographic%20Regions/Pages/Mount%20Carmel.aspx](http://www.goisrael.com/Tourism_Eng/Tourist%20Information/Discover%20Israel/Geographic%20Regions/Pages/Mount%20Carmel.aspx)

You could easily spend hours hiking in Israel's largest nature reserve, enjoying the beautiful scenery and wildlife.

## Parks & Gardens

### Arbel National Park and Nature Reserve

Highway 7717, Tiberias  
Haifa, Israel

The park offers a breathtaking view of Golan Heights, Galilee and the Jordan Valley. The park rises 600 ft/181 m above sea level and has some rare flora and fauna.

### Bar'am National Park

Highway 899, Kibbutz Sasa-Kibbutz Baram Road  
Haifa, Israel

This national park consists mostly of oak forests. It also houses an ancient synagogue and a village church, as well as the maronite Baram Village.

### The Achziv Beach National Park

Located about 24 mi/39 km north of Haifa, this park stretches across the coastline toward the north of the city of Nahariya. It's great for swimming, cycling and fishing; there are also plenty of lagoons and coves to explore.

Phone 4-982-3263.

## Religious Sites

### Elijah's Cave

230 Derech Allenby  
Haifa, Israel

**Phone:** 4-852-7430

[http://goisrael.com/Tourism\\_Eng/Tourist%20Information/Christian%20Themes/Details/Pages/Elijah%20Cave%20chr.aspx](http://goisrael.com/Tourism_Eng/Tourist%20Information/Christian%20Themes/Details/Pages/Elijah%20Cave%20chr.aspx)

Located on the side of Mount Carmel, this is the site where Elijah is said to have hidden to escape the wrath of King Ahab. Pilgrims and visitors insert prayers on slips of paper in the ceiling.

### Or Torah Synagogue

13 Kaplan St.  
Haifa, Israel

**Phone:** 4-981-8451

<http://www.akk.org.il/en/Old-Acree-Or-Torah-Synagogue>

This Tunisian synagogue is covered with mosaics on every floor, step, wall and ceiling. Seven Torah arks adorn the main prayer hall, and the dome features the symbols of the various tribes. Visits must be scheduled in advance.

Reservations required.

## Wineries, Breweries & Distilleries

### Binyamina Winery

Winery Street, Binyamina  
Haifa, Israel

**Phone:** 4-610-7535

<http://www.binyaminawines.com>

Located about 45 minutes south of Haifa, this vineyard and winery produces sweet wines, table wines, liqueurs and quality brandy. Tours are available.

Sunday-Thursday 9 am-5 pm, Friday 8:30 am-2 pm.

### Carmel Winery

Zikhron Ya'akov  
Haifa, Israel

**Phone:** 4-639-0997

<http://www.carmelwines.co.il>

This winery produces some excellent wines that are stored in special vaulted-ceiling wine cellars. Take the 45-minute guided tour and taste some of the region's best wines.

### Tishbi Estate Winery

Highway 652, Benyamina  
Haifa, Israel

**Phone:** 4-638-0434

<http://www.tishbi.com>

Located about a half-hour south of Haifa, these 120-year-old vineyards still yield excellent grapes that go into making some of the finest wines in the region. You can go on a one-hour guided tour that includes a wine tasting and a trip to the distillery where brandy is made. A restaurant, gallery and coffee shop are also on-site.

Sunday-Thursday 8 am-5 pm, Friday 8 am-1 pm.

## Shopping

Haifa is home to plenty of shops, galleries and department stores. For a glimpse of local life, spend the afternoon at one of the trendy malls, such as Grand Canyon or Castra Center.

## Galleries

### Marc Chagall Artists' House

24 Hazonut St.  
Haifa, Israel

**Phone:** 4-852-2355

[http://www.visit-haifa.org/eng/The\\_Marc\\_Chagall\\_Artists%E2%80%99\\_House](http://www.visit-haifa.org/eng/The_Marc_Chagall_Artists%E2%80%99_House)

Displays and sells paintings and sculptures by renowned artists. It's the best place in the city to find sculptures and unique works of art.

## Shopping Areas

### Castra Center

8 Moshe Filman St.  
Haifa, Israel

**Phone:** 4-859-0000

[http://www.visit-haifa.org/eng/Castra\\_Center](http://www.visit-haifa.org/eng/Castra_Center)

This unique mall has a creative bent: Its undulating architecture is decorated with a variety of bright paintings and sculptures. Inside are two museums, galleries, the largest ceramic-tiled painting in the world, and a variety of restaurants and coffee shops.

### Horev Center

15 Horev St.  
Haifa, Israel

**Phone:** 4-824-6164

[http://www.visit-haifa.org/eng/Horev\\_Center](http://www.visit-haifa.org/eng/Horev_Center)

The mall has three floors that house a variety of shops, cinemas, banks and a supermarket.

### The Grand Canyon

54 Simha Golan Road  
Haifa, Israel

**Phone:** 4-814-5115

<http://grandcanyon.co.il>

This is the largest mall in Haifa. In addition to boutiques, department stores and sporting goods shops, there are also several outlets exclusively for leading brands

## Dining

### Dining Overview

Local delicacies found in Haifa include *knafe* is a delicious pastry made from specially prepared dough called *mafroukeh* and topped with *akkawi* goat cheese. You will also find that fresh vegetables and olive oil figure into most of the local cuisine.

### Local & Regional

#### Abu Christo

Old Acre 11-330  
Haifa, Israel

**Phone:** 4-991-0065

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Abu-Christo-Acre/172368262809478>

Founded more than 50 years ago, this waterside restaurant specializes in local dishes, including grill-fried goat fish, spicy shrimp and deep-fried calamari with tartar sauce.

## Security

### Personal Safety

Whereas the Gaza Strip is a highly sensitive area to visit, Haifa is quite safe. Take the same precautions you'd take while visiting a new city. Don't travel alone at night, and try to travel within well-established tourist areas, avoiding more remote parts of town. We don't recommend traveling by public bus.

### Health

Excellent health care services are available in Haifa. Rambam provides emergency medical services around the clock. <https://www.rambam.org.il/EnglishSite/Pages/default.aspx>.

If you take prescription medication, be sure to pack enough to last you through your trip. Most over-the-counter medications are available at local pharmacies.

## Facts

### What to Wear

The dress code in Haifa is generally casual. Pack some warm clothes if you are visiting during winter. Ensure that you are modestly dressed when entering any of the religious shrines. In Jewish neighborhoods, women are expected to dress modestly, with sleeves covering the elbows and skirts reaching well below the knees. Carrying a shawl or a large scarf is helpful, as you can cover up when necessary.

## Jerusalem, Israel

### Overview

#### Introductio

For centuries, Jerusalem, Israel, has been a place where different ideas, people and religions run into one another, and that's a big part of what makes it such a fascinating place to visit. As the focal point of three of the world's major religions—Judaism, Christianity and Islam—Jerusalem's temples and shrines continuously welcome pilgrims bound for those places that make the city so special.

The collision of cultures is also part of the reason that Jerusalem has been the scene of upheaval and conquest throughout its long history. Conquerors have left their marks on Jerusalem, from the Greeks and Romans to the Ottomans and the British. The Old City, its massive fortifications enclosing the Temple Mount, Western Wall and Church of the Holy Sepulchre, has its foundations some 3,000 years ago in the days of King Solomon, who enlarged the walled area, while majestic remnants of King Herod's massive construction works 1,000 years later are clearly visible.



## Highlights

**Sights**—The wonders of the Old City—the Western Wall, Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem Archaeological Park and Davidson Center, Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the Citadel (Tower of David) and the bazaar; the view from the Haas Promenade.

**Museums**—The breathtaking Israel Museum and the adjacent Shrine of the Book containing the Dead Sea Scrolls; somber Yad Vashem museum of the Holocaust; the Bible Lands Museum.

**Memorable Meals**—Adom restaurant at First Station; delicious, biblically inspired foods at Eucalyptus; Lebanese-Palestinian cuisine at Turquoise; Azura for its home-style Iraqi, Kurdish and Sephardic cuisine in the heart of the Mahane Yehuda market.

**Walks**—A stroll on the Haas Promenade day or night; the streets of Mea She'arim; through the Mahane Yehuda open-air marketplace; a jaunt through the village of Ein Kerem and its art galleries.

**Especially for Kids**—A trip in the Time Elevator; the Tisch Family Zoological Gardens for an up-close look at animals whose ancestors date from biblical times; the youth wing at the Israel Museum.

## Geography

The Old City is the main attraction for most visitors. Its twisting, cobblestoned streets can be overwhelming to newcomers, but if its individual areas are considered separately, it's more manageable. It contains most of the historic and religious sites and is defined by the ancient walls that enclose the 4-sq-mi/10-sq-km area. The Old City is further divided into Jewish, Muslim, Christian and Armenian quarters.

East Jerusalem is predominantly Arab and mostly lies north of the Old City, adjoining the Muslim Quarter.

The New City, better known as West Jerusalem, is a large area that encompasses much of Jerusalem outside the Old City and East Jerusalem. It's home to the main commercial and residential districts, as well as many of the high-end hotels. Because it covers such a wide swath of Jerusalem, it helps to break the New City down into smaller neighborhoods where popular attractions are found.

The part of the New City known as downtown is centered on Zion Square. Mamilla Mall is near Jaffa Gate, with stylish shops and cafes. About a mile/kilometer south of downtown is the German Colony, an area crowded with trendy restaurants and cafes, especially along Emek Refaim Road. Farther south is Talpiot, a hot spot for dance clubs. The Russian Compound is just to the west of the Old City and is home to many restaurants and nightspots popular with a younger crowd. West of downtown are the Knesset (Israeli parliament) and other government buildings, as well as Museum Row, with the Israel Museum and Shrine of the Book as its centerpiece. Farther west, Har Hazikaron (Mount Herzl) has important sights and memorials, including the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial.

Two other areas of note lie outside the New City area. The Mount of Olives, just east of the Old City, is the location of key landmarks related to biblical events in both the Hebrew and Christian bibles. At the opposite end of the Jerusalem metropolitan area, on the city's western edge, is lovely Ein Kerem, which has religious sites, restaurants and other attractions.

## History

Long before the most recent tensions, Jerusalem was the scene of repeated conflict and redemption. The city was a Canaanite settlement during the second millennium BC until its capture by King David in 997 BC, when it began to grow into the cultural and spiritual center of the Hebrews. David's son King Solomon constructed the Holy Temple on Temple Mount (the "First Temple") and erected city walls. Jerusalem was subsequently captured, and the Temple destroyed, by the Babylonians in the sixth century BC. Two generations later, the Jews rebuilt the Temple (the "Second Temple").

The city was conquered by Alexander the Great in 331 BC and so became part of the Hellenic (Greek) world, which led to the successful Maccabean Revolt in 167 BC and the setting up of the independent Jewish kingdom of the Hasmoneans. This survived until the conquest of Jerusalem by the Roman Empire in 63 BC. Acting as Rome's proxy, King Herod grandly reconstructed the Holy Temple, but under Roman rule, Judaism was partly suppressed, leading to periodic revolts. This culminated in the Great Revolt of AD 66, which was resoundingly crushed. The Temple was burned to the ground and all Jews expelled in AD 70, ending all semblance of a Jewish state for nearly 2,000 years.

The Emperor Hadrian rebuilt Jerusalem in AD 135 as a Roman, pagan city—the layout of today's Old City is largely his work—and renamed it Aelia Capitolina. He banned the practice of Judaism, and Jews were forbidden to visit the city.

In the fourth century, Emperor Constantine was the first Roman ruler to convert to Christianity, leading to a flourish of church-building and spiritual activity. Indeed, many of the construction projects in Jerusalem were overseen by Helena, Constantine's devoutly Christian mother; the most notable of these is the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

Muslims captured the city in AD 638, revering it as a place visited in a dream by the prophet Muhammad. They were ousted in 1099 during the Crusades, when both Muslims and Jews were violently repressed under Christian rule. Jerusalem returned to Muslim hands in 1187. The Ottomans were the next empire to seize control, beginning their tenure in the early 1500s. They rebuilt the protective walls around the Old City that remain to this day.

Because it was far from the Ottoman capital in Constantinople (now Istanbul), Jerusalem fell into political and physical disorder until the 1800s, when Christian pilgrims regained interest in the city. Increasing waves of Jewish immigrants, persecuted elsewhere, also began pouring back to their spiritual center. By this time, Jerusalem was known as a part of Palestine and had a large population of Araba Muslims. The British took over after World War I, but the influx of European Jews was unstoppable, especially in the 1930s, and the British were eventually driven out by an increasingly effective Jewish resistance movement; the British mandate ended in 1948. Following a United Nations vote, it was agreed that the Jews should be allowed to set up a state in part of their ancient homeland. The proposed area did not include Jerusalem, but opposition and invasion by the surrounding Arab nations ignited Israel's 1948 war for independence, at the end of which a line was drawn through the city: Jews controlled the western districts, and Arabs held the Old City and East Jerusalem.

The Arab neighbors continued their opposition and, as an outcome of the Six Day War in 1967, Israel captured the rest of Jerusalem and annexed the Old City. The city was reunited and declared Israel's capital, but it did not receive international recognition. (Upon the 40th anniversary of the reunification of the city of Jerusalem, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a resolution in 2007 calling for recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's undivided capital.)



Since the early 1990s, there has been a host of attempts to create a lasting peace agreement between the two sides. In 1995, Israel granted increased Palestinian self-rule in Gaza and the West Bank. Since then, a central issue has been the highly charged question of who will control the Old City and East Jerusalem.

Jerusalem suffered through a wave of terrorist attacks in the 1990s and during the Second Intifada between 2001 and 2005. These gradually came to an end with the construction of the "security barrier"—a high fence (in places, a concrete wall, which can be viewed just east of the city) protecting Israel from the West Bank. Although controversial, the approximately 500-mi/800-km barrier has succeeded in deterring more than 98% of terrorist attacks.

Although peace talks between Israelis and Palestinians have stalled under the Bush and Obama administrations, Jerusalem is actually safer today than most U.S. cities. Like the rest of the country, Jerusalemites remain extremely security conscious. With the relative calm since 2005 and the booming Israeli economy, Israelis and tourists alike have returned to the city, revitalizing and greatly expanding the shopping, restaurant and nightclub scenes.

## Potpourri

The City of David, outside the walls of the Old City, is the most ancient section of Jerusalem.

Jerusalem is the most excavated city in the country, with only about 30% of the work completed.

The holiest site in Jerusalem, according to both Jewish and Islamic tradition, is the Temple Mount (Har HaBayit in Hebrew or Al-Haram ash-Sharif in Arabic). For Jews it is the site of the Holy Temple (or Beit HaMikdash), whereas Muslims revere it as the place from which the prophet Muhammad ascended to heaven in a dream on his Night Journey.

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre was designated the site of Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection by Helena of Constantinople (Emperor Constantine's mother) in the fourth century. Some Christian scholars disagree and think the Garden Tomb is a more likely location.

The Western Wall, or Kotel, which serves as an outdoor synagogue, is a place of prayer because it's the closest space to Temple Mount, which housed the Ark of the Covenant.

If you are wondering what happens to all those little letters left in the crevices of the Western Wall, once a month they are taken out and buried on top of the Mount of Olives.

## See & Do

### Sightseeing

Jerusalem is a nearly unsurpassed sightseeing experience. Everywhere you look, there's an archaeological, historical or religious (and sometimes all three in one) treasure. You won't be able to see everything this city has to offer in one visit.

The greatest concentration of sites is in the Old City. Consider hiring a guide or, at the least, get a very detailed map: The labyrinth of cobblestoned streets is difficult to navigate, and the rows of houses along the streets often hide nearby landmarks from view. Be sure to see the souk (pronounced *shook* in Hebrew), the city's old market. The sights and smells will take you back centuries. From the market, it's an easy walk to most of the Old City's attractions.

Not to be missed is the Citadel, or Tower of David, which is alongside the Jaffa Gate—the main gateway into the Old City. It houses the Museum of the History of Jerusalem, and an impressive sound-and-light show is performed there almost every night. From its roof, the panoramic view of the Old City is outstanding. For another fascinating perspective, take a walk along the ramparts of the city walls when they're open—there's a convenient place to ascend at Jaffa Gate.

At the heart of the Christian Quarter rises the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which many Christians believe marks the place where the tomb of Jesus lies; visitors may descend into the crypt. Once rather dark and grim, the church is now suffused with light from a skylight capping its restored dome.

Farther east, in the beautifully restored Jewish Quarter, is one of the most moving sites in the Old City: the Western Wall. It has stood for some 2,000 years as a lone remnant of the Holy Temple, which once stood on the Temple Mount. Its stones have been rubbed smooth by the hands of the faithful who have prayed there and who have stuffed its crevices with paper messages intended for Heaven. Above the Western Wall is the Temple Mount, the Old City's focal point and the location of two important Muslim holy sites: the Dome of the Rock and Al-Aksa Mosque.

The main entrance to the Holy Temple was originally on the south side of Temple Mount, which is now the fascinating Jerusalem Archaeological Park. A highlight of the restorations there is the Hulda stairway up to the Temple, climbed by generations of Jewish worshippers—Jesus among them.

Though you may be tempted to devote all of your time to the Old City, try to make time for the highlights of West Jerusalem, most notably its leading museums and outdoor market, Mahane Yehuda.

## Historic Sites

### Al-Aksa Mosque

Haram al-Sharif (Temple Mount), Old City  
Jerusalem, Israel

This is the main Islamic prayer hall on the southern part of the Temple Mount and arguably one of the most important mosques in the Muslim world. Its name means "the farthest," and it accommodates 5,000 people. The original mosque was destroyed in an earthquake in the middle of the eighth century. It was restored by the Abassids, but most decorations in today's mosque date from medieval times.

The adjacent White Mosque is reserved for women.

Sunday-Thursday 7:30 am-11 in winter; summer hours are the same, with an added hour 1:30-2:30 pm. In theory, admission is included in the ticket for the Temple Mount (up to 38 NIS), but non-Muslims are likely to be refused entry.

### Ammunition Hill Memorial and Museum

Givat Hatachmoshet, Ammunition Hill  
Jerusalem, Israel

This memorial is dedicated to the 182 Israelis who fell in the fight for Jerusalem during the Six Day War in 1967. It takes its name from the British munitions store that stood there during the Mandate period. Walk through bunkers and check out the five exhibition halls full of weapons and maps. There's also a short informative film that screens every half-hour until 4:30 pm.

Open Sunday-Thursday 9 am-5 pm in winter (till 6 pm in summer), Friday and eves of holidays 9 am-1 pm. 20 NIS.

## Bridge of Strings

Designed by renowned Spanish architect Santiago Calatrava, the Bridge of Strings (or Chords) is becoming one of the seminal landmarks of Israel's capital. Controversial both during its prolonged construction and even when it first opened, the sleek structure—inspired by the shape of the lyre known as David's Harp—serves light-rail trams and pedestrians, thus easing the snarling of traffic at the city's main entrance. Visible from a distance of many miles/kilometers, it now heralds the arrival of the visitor or pilgrim to the Holy City.

## Church of All Nations

E-Sheikh, Mount of Olives  
Jerusalem, Israel

The Church of All Nations, also known as the Basilica of the Agony, lies on the grounds of The Garden of Gethsemane, where it's said Jesus spent his last night in prayer before he was betrayed by Judas. Mosaics inside the dimly lit church depict the last days of Jesus' life, and the facade portrays Jesus bringing peace to all nations. Many countries took part in the building of the church in the 1920s (hence its name), and their symbols decorate its apses and domes. The church is considered second in Christian religious importance only to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Because this church is at the bottom of the Mount of Olives path, it is a common gathering spot for camel and taxi drivers waiting to take tourists for a ride.

Visiting hours Monday-Saturday 8 am-noon and 2-5:30 pm. There's an English-language service Sunday at 11 am. Free.

## Church of the Holy Sepulchre

1 Ste. Helena St., Old City  
Jerusalem, Israel

To many Christians, this is the holiest site in the world. Most denominations believe the church marks the site of Calvary (also known as Golgotha), where Jesus was crucified, and the place where he was laid to rest. The first church on this site was built by Constantine the Great, at the request of his pious mother Helena, on top of a Roman temple to Venus and Jupiter.

The present building's cornerstone was laid by the Crusaders in 1149. Within the many rooms are the last five Stations of the Cross, including the sites where it's thought Jesus was stripped of his clothes and nailed to the cross. Up the stairs to the right of the entrance lies Golgotha, and under the altar is a hole said to be where the cross was placed; people line up to touch the spot. His sepulchre stands in an elaborate structure within the rotunda. The marble slab that covers the tomb has been worn smooth by the hands and lips of millions of visitors. Expect long files of visitors waiting to enter. Modest dress required.

Open daily April-September 5 am-8 pm, October-March 5 am-7 pm. Free.

## Citadel (Tower of David)

Jaffa Gate, Old City  
Jerusalem, Israel

**Phone:** 02-626-5333

<http://www.towerofdavid.org.il>

Jerusalem's 2,000-year-old Citadel first housed Herod the Great's palace, which was destroyed in AD 66 by Jewish rebels. This important historical and archaeological site is now home to the Museum of the History of Jerusalem, which focuses on the city's incredibly complex story. If you can, walk along the Citadel's towers—the views of the city are spectacular.

September-June Monday-Thursday 10 am-4 pm; Saturday, Jewish holidays and the day before a Jewish holiday 10 am-2 pm. July and August Saturday-Wednesday 10 am-5 pm, Thursday 10 am-6 pm, Friday 10 am-2 pm. 30 NIS adults.

## City of David National Park

Maalot Ir David Street (Kfar Hashiloah)  
Jerusalem, Israel

**Phone:** 02-626-8700

<http://www.cityofdavid.org.il>

A common misconception about the Old City is that it constitutes the original city of Jerusalem. The original city of King David's time was actually located on a slope farther south. Located just outside Dung Gate, the City of David is a historical and archaeological treasure, offering insights into a more ancient Jerusalem. A highlight of any visit to the City of David, and a great adventure, is a walk through Hezekiah's Tunnel, a 1,815-ft/555-m waterway hewn deep under the ancient city by King Hezekiah in 701 BC. Make sure to wear appropriate footwear and take a flashlight for a walk in shallow water.

Site open Sunday-Thursday 8 am-7 pm, Friday 8 am-4 pm. Site closes two hours earlier in winter. Closed on Jewish holidays, with early closing the day before a Jewish holiday. 35 NIS adults for guided tour.

## Dome of the Rock

On Haram al-Sharif (Temple Mount), Old City  
Jerusalem, Israel

Built in AD 691, this mosque is one of the holiest sites in the Muslim world. According to tradition, after a miraculous journey through the air from Mecca, the prophet Muhammad ascended to heaven from a rock at this spot. Muslim authorities ordered a beautiful building to be constructed around the rock to commemorate the event. According to Jewish tradition, the rock marks the spot where Abraham bound his son Isaac and where the Temple's inner sanctum lay. The dome is even more spectacular thanks to an application of gold leaf in 1994, donated by Jordan's King Hussein. The Dome is always off-limits to non-Muslims during prayers, on Friday and on Islamic holidays. At other times, in theory, entry is included in the ticket for Temple Mount (up to 38 NIS), but non-Muslims are likely to be refused entry.

## Garden Tomb

Conrad Schick Street (across from Damascus Gate), East Jerusalem  
Jerusalem, Israel

**Phone:** 02-627-2745

<http://www.gardentomb.org>

Located behind the East Jerusalem bus station, the Garden Tomb is a tranquil place of prayer and meditation and provides respite from the bustle outside its gates. The garden is believed by some to be Golgotha or Calvary, the site of Jesus' crucifixion, rather than the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. The beautifully manicured gardens include a tomb said to be that of Joseph of Arimathea, who placed Jesus' body in his own tomb after the crucifixion.

The garden and its bookshop are open for tours and worship Monday-Saturday 8:30 am-noon and 2-5:30 pm. Free tours are conducted by volunteers; groups must book in advance. Free.

### Grotto of the Apostles and Mary's Tomb

Mount of Olives  
Jerusalem, Israel

The small, often crowded Grotto is said to be the site of the betrayal and arrest of Jesus, as well as the place where the Last Supper was held. Adjoining the Grotto is Mary's Tomb, an Orthodox church built over one of the places where people believe the body of the mother of Jesus was laid to rest, along with chapels dedicated to her parents and to Joseph.

Daily 8:30 am-noon and 2:30-5 pm. Free.

### Hadassah University Medical Center

Kiryat Hadassah  
Jerusalem, Israel

**Phone:** 02-677-7111

<http://www.hadassah-med.com>

Besides being Israel's largest and most modern medical facility, Hadassah Hospital's chapel is a popular tourist destination. Of particular interest are the Chagall Windows, a gift from renowned artist Marc Chagall in 1962. The 12 stained-glass windows bathe the hospital's Abbell Synagogue in an ever-changing light. Each depicts one of Jacob's 12 sons and contains a quotation from Moses' blessings to the 12 tribes.

Guided tours of the synagogue in several languages take place Sunday-Thursday 8 am-4 pm. The site closes at 1:30 pm on Friday, the day before Jewish holidays and the intermediate days of Passover and Sukkot. Free.

### Jerusalem Archaeological Park and Davidson Center

Temple Mount Excavations (near the Dung Gate)  
Jerusalem, Israel

**Phone:** 02-627-7550

<http://www.archpark.org.il>

This extensive park next to Western Wall Plaza is among Israel's most important and impressive antiquity sites, as it includes the excavated Ophel Gardens and Southern Wall, and the partly restored Temple steps up to the Hulda Gates, dating from the Second Temple period. The Hulda stairway was the entrance to the Temple during Jesus' time. The site is connected to Western Wall Plaza at Robinson's Arch, a remnant of the stairway that led to the Holy Temple. Inside the Park, the Davidson Center takes visitors on a virtual visit to the Temple as it once was. Also on-site are extensive remains of a Byzantine house below ground level.

Open Sunday-Thursday 8 am-5 pm, Friday 8 am-2 pm. Closed on Jewish holidays. Admission 30 NIS adults.

## Jerusalem Great Synagogue

56 King George St., Downtown  
Jerusalem, Israel

**Phone:** 02-623-0628

<http://www.jerusalemgreatsynagogue.com>

Built in 1982, Jerusalem's principal Ashkenazi synagogue is dedicated to those who perished in the Holocaust and Israeli soldiers who died in battle. Considerable efforts were made to ensure that the design and interior decor of the synagogue would make it one of the most beautiful in the world, and the results are spectacular. Dress modestly.

The building is open to visitors Monday-Friday approximately 9 am-12:30 pm. Free, with free guided tours by prior arrangement.

## Knesset

Eliezer Kaplan Street, Givat Ram  
Jerusalem, Israel

**Phone:** 02-675-3333

<http://www.knesset.gov.il>

Israel's parliament, the Knesset, is housed in a strongly defensive, partly underground five-story structure built in 1966. The 16-ft/5-m menorah outside is a gift from Great Britain. Tapestries in the entrance hall are by Marc Chagall. A unicameral body with 120 members who may address the house in either Hebrew or Arabic, the Knesset usually convenes Monday-Wednesday (except when in recess). The sometimes very lively sessions may be watched from the public gallery on Monday and Tuesday from 4 pm, Wednesday from 11 am. Tours in seven languages are available on Sunday and Thursday, with English-language tours at 8:30 am, noon and 2 pm. Foreign visitors must show a passport. Also worth seeing, without a guide, is the Knesset's Archaeology Park, with finds dating from Biblical times.

There is no dress code, but anyone "inappropriately dressed" (no shorts allowed) may be refused entry. Free.

## Mount of Olives

Enjoy the unforgettable panoramic view of the Old City's walls, Temple Mount, mosque minarets, church towers, modern West Jerusalem buildings and Judean desert and hills. This holy site for Jews, Christians and Muslims is named for its ancient olive trees. From biblical times, Jews have been buried there. In fact, the Jewish cemetery—more than 3,000 years old—is the world's oldest continually used cemetery. Among the more than 150,000 graves is that of former Prime Minister Menachem Begin. The Valley of Kidron at its foot is the site of some ancient tombs, including that of the prophet Zechariah. The Mount is where Christians believe Jesus wept over Jerusalem and later ascended to heaven. It is home to the Russian Orthodox Church of St. Mary Magdalene, Garden of Gethsemane and other sacred Christian sites.

## Mount Zion

Outside the Old City walls near Zion Gate  
Jerusalem, Israel

This small but prominent hill is traditionally regarded by some as the site of both the Last Supper and of King David's Tomb, although neither of these has any biblical or historical basis. The massive Dormition Abbey Church was built there in the early 20th century on the spot where, according to tradition, Mary fell

into sleep before her burial and assumption into heaven. The believed room of the Last Supper (Coenaculum) is located on the second floor of a Crusader-era building with older foundations. King David's Tomb is located just below. Also on Mount Zion is The Chamber of the Holocaust (Martef HaShoah), a very powerful precursor of Yad Vashem. The Catholic cemetery on Mount Zion is the burial place of Oskar Schindler, who saved the lives of 1,200 Jews in the Holocaust and was the subject of the film *Schindler's List*.

Daily 8 am-5 pm (till 1 pm on Friday, sometimes closed on Saturday). Dress modestly.

## Russian Orthodox Church of St. Mary Magdalene

Mount of Olives  
Jerusalem, Israel

**Phone:** 02-628-4371

[http://www.jerusalem-mission.org/convent\\_magdalene.html](http://www.jerusalem-mission.org/convent_magdalene.html)

Situated on the slope of the Mount of Olives near the Garden of Gethsemane, the church makes an impressive landmark with its cluster of gold, onion-shaped domes. Czar Alexander III (whose anti-Jewish pogroms led to a great influx of Jews into Palestine at the time) built the church in 1888 and dedicated it to his mother, the Empress Maria Alexandrovna. Large murals depicting the life of Mary Magdalene were painted by well-known Russian artist Sergei Ivanov. The many wooden icons of Mary Magdalene and of the Virgin Mary with Child, among others, are masterpieces of Russian art. The church is the place of worship for the adjoining Russian Orthodox women's convent.

Open to visitors Tuesday and Thursday 10 am-noon. Free.

## Temple Mount

Old City  
Jerusalem, Israel

This calm, quiet, spacious area, sacred to Jews and Muslims, visually dominates the Old City and makes a startling contrast to the hectic world outside its walls. The Israeli government has given full control of the site to the Waqf (Islamic religious authorities), who strictly enforce Muslim rules of modesty and behavior. Grassy areas, broad plazas paved with pale stone slabs and walkways shaded by trees give it the feel of an attractive city park. From the walls there are fine views of the Mount of Olives on one side and the Old City on the other. Two beautiful and much-revered Islamic shrines stand on Temple Mount: the Dome of the Rock and Al-Aksa Mosque. Beside Al-Aksa is the Islamic Museum, with an extensive collection of Islamic artifacts displayed in what was originally a 12th-century Crusader building. However, non-Muslims usually may not enter any of these buildings; Jews are sometimes admitted, but are not allowed to pray or make any gesture simulating prayer.

Several gates give access to Temple Mount, but all non-Muslims must enter via Moors Gate on the raised wooden walkway from Western Wall Plaza. Security is tight and there are long queues. No shorts or bare arms are allowed for either men or women. No alcohol is permitted, and no non-Muslim religious symbols or writings of any kind are permitted (no crucifix necklaces, for example).

Closed to non-Muslims during Muslim prayers (times vary) and on Friday and Muslim holidays; otherwise, it is usually open Sunday-Thursday 7:30-10:30 am and 12:30-1:30 pm; during Ramadan, Temple Mount is closed in the afternoon. Hours may be changed at the guards' discretion. During periods of tension, the site may be completely closed without warning. Entry is typically free, but a charge may be reinstated.

## The Burnt House

13 Tiferet Israel St. (Jewish Quarter), Old City  
Jerusalem, Israel

Also known as Katros House, the remains of this ancient residence date from the end of the Second Temple Period (538 BC-AD 70). There are visible signs that the house and its contents were destroyed by fire, presumed to be during the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans under Titus in AD 70. What remains of the building gives interesting glimpses into life at that time. The ground floor consisted of a small courtyard, four rooms, a kitchen and a *mikve* (ritual bath). The focus of the visit is an audiovisual presentation in six languages picturing the family who may have lived there; the presentation is shown every 40 minutes.

Open Sunday 10 am-5 pm, Monday-Thursday 9 am-5 pm, Friday 9 am-1 pm. 25 NIS combined ticket with the Wohl Archaeology Museum.

## The Supreme Court

Shaarai Mishpat Street (behind the Wohl Rose Garden)  
Jerusalem, Israel

**Phone:** 077-270-3333

<http://www.court.gov.il>

One of Jerusalem's architectural masterpieces, the Supreme Court is a breathtaking modern structure that reflects Jerusalem's ancient architecture. There are five courtrooms, a library and chambers for the justices. There is a free tour of the court building (in English) Sunday-Thursday at noon. Individuals can join the group tours or stroll at their leisure. Groups of 10 or more should book in advance.

Open Sunday-Thursday 8:30 am-2:30 pm. Free.

## The Via Dolorosa

Antonia's Fortress (starting point just inside Lions' Gate, also known as St. Stephen's Gate; ends at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre)  
Jerusalem, Israel

The Sorrowful Way traces the path taken by Jesus as he bore the cross to the site of his crucifixion. Along this route are the famous 12 Stations of the Cross, now signposted with Roman numerals from I-XII. Every Friday afternoon, pilgrims chanting hymns walk along this route, much of which currently runs through the Old City bazaar. On Good Friday, many bear crosses in reenactment of the original procession.

## Ticho House

9 Harav Kook St., New City  
Jerusalem, Israel

**Phone:** 02-624-5068

<http://www.english.imjnet.org.il>

Also known as Anna Ticho House, this beautiful, spacious 19th-century house was one of the first in Jerusalem constructed outside the Old City walls. It was bought by the artist Anna Ticho and her cousin Albert Ticho in 1924. The house contains the family's reference library of books about Jerusalem, art and literature; Hanukkah lamps collected by Dr. Abraham Ticho; an exhibition of works by Anna Ticho (who won the Israel Prize in 1980); and temporary exhibitions. Free concerts by talented immigrant musicians



on Friday at 11 am. The quaint garden cafe is the perfect spot for a break from the noisy city. The house is part of the Israel Museum.

Open Sunday-Thursday 10 am-5 pm (Tuesday till 10 pm), Friday 10 am-2 pm. The cafe is open daily 10 am-11 pm (till 2 pm on Friday). Free admission.

## Western Wall

Temple Mount (at the southwest foot), Old City  
Jerusalem, Israel

<http://english.thekotel.org>

The most visited Jewish site in Israel (and the world) is a remnant of the supporting wall built by King Herod around Temple Mount, on which stood the second Holy Temple, destroyed by the Romans in AD 70. Although not part of the Temple building itself, this Western Wall is the only authentic relic of the ancient Jewish Temple (Beit HaMikdash) where Jewish worship was based for two millennia. The actual location of the Holy of Holies at the heart of the Temple was unknown at the time the Jews returned from exile, and Orthodox Jews shun the Temple Mount in fear of accidentally stepping into the inner sanctum where only high priests are allowed to enter. Also called the Kotel, the Wailing Wall (erroneously) and, simply, the Wall, it is regarded as the holiest place for Jewish people.

The vast paved plaza in front of the wall is often crowded—close up, you can see hundreds of scraps of paper containing the prayers of the faithful stuffed into the wall's crevices. Respect the separation of men's and women's sections at the wall. On Shabbat (Friday evening and Saturday), visitors to the site are prohibited to smoke, take pictures or use cell phones.

Open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Dress modestly when approaching the wall, and men should wear a *kippa* (paper *kippas* available on-site). Free.

## Western Wall Tunnels

Temple Mount (at the southwest foot), Old City  
Jerusalem, Israel

<http://english.thekotel.org>

These ancient tunnels, which date from the time of the Judean kings, are open to visitors, but you must be part of a prebooked tour, which lasts about 75 minutes. Exposing walls built by a series of conquering armies down through the ages, the tour also shows several videos explaining modes of construction from the early days. Dress modestly.

Tours are Sunday-Thursday 7 am-evening (exact time depends on demand), Friday 7 am-noon. Closed on Jewish holidays. Advance reservations required as early as two months in advance. 30 NIS adults.

## Museums

### Armenian Museum

Armenian Quarter, Old City  
Jerusalem, Israel

Housed in a beautiful old building in the Old City's small Armenian Quarter, this intriguing and poignant museum holds a substantial collection of objects highlighting the history and culture of the Armenian people, including the Turkish genocide of Armenians nearly a century ago. Jerusalem has been home to a small Armenian community since the mass conversion of Armenia to Christianity in the fourth century.

Open Monday-Saturday 9:30 am-4:30 pm. 5 NIS.

## Bible Lands Museum

Shmuel Stephan Weiz St. 21 (next to the Israel Museum)  
Jerusalem, Israel

**Phone:** 02-561-1066

<http://www.blmj.org>

This museum is home to one of the world's most important collections of rare works of art from the biblical period. Artifacts exhibited are said to be physical evidence of the civilizations described in the Bible. People of all faiths visit this museum to learn about ancient history and the development of Western religions.

Open Sunday-Thursday 9:30 am-5:30 pm (Wednesday till 9:30 pm), Friday and the day before a Jewish holiday 9:30 am-2 pm, Saturday 10 am-2 pm. English-language guided tours are offered daily at 10:30 am (additional tour Wednesday at 5:30 pm). 44 NIS adults.

## Bloomfield Science Museum

Museum Boulevard (next to the Hebrew University Campus), Givat Ram  
Jerusalem, Israel

**Phone:** 02-654-4888

<http://www.mada.org.il>

In this hands-on, innovative museum, children of all ages are encouraged to touch the exhibits. You'll learn why buildings don't fall down, how the Internet works and more.

Monday-Thursday 10 am-6 pm, Friday 10 am-2 pm, Saturday 10 am-3 pm. 45-60 NIS adults.

## Israel Museum

Ruppin Street, Givat Ram  
Jerusalem, Israel

**Phone:** 02-670-8811

<http://www.english.imjnet.org.il>

The largest cultural institution in Israel and one of the world's leading art and archaeology museums is a must-see. Housed in 10 wings, collections range from prehistoric archaeology to contemporary art. It has the world's most comprehensive collection of Judaica, and there's a separate pavilion that depicts the ethnology of Jewish people around the world. It also has world-class African and Asian Pacific art exhibits.

The Shrine of the Book is a key part of the museum. It showcases the famous Dead Sea Scrolls, the 2,000-year-old manuscripts discovered in 11 caves in Qumran, overlooking the Dead Sea, in 1947-56. The Shrine of the Book also displays the 10th-century Aleppo Codex, believed to be the oldest complete Bible in Hebrew. Allow at least three hours to see the entire complex.

Open Sunday, Monday, Wednesday and Thursday 10 am-5 pm; Tuesday 4-9 pm; Friday and the day before a Jewish holiday 10 am-2 pm; Saturday and Jewish holidays 10 am-5 pm. 50 NIS adults.

## L.A. Mayer Memorial Museum of Islamic Art

2 Ha Palmach St.  
Jerusalem, Israel

**Phone:** 02-566-1291

<http://www.islamicart.co.il>

One of the world's most comprehensive collections of Islamic art, this museum displays hundreds of art objects from Islamic countries representing many periods. The works are displayed in chronological order, allowing you to follow the evolution of Islamic art from its beginnings to the 1800s. Among the works are magnificent ceramic ware, figurines and tiles; an outstanding collection of glasswork and metalwork; jewelry; and a selection of calligraphy, miniatures and textiles. There's also a fascinating collection of clocks, including the famous Salomons collection of Bruquet watches from Paris. Guided tours by arrangement only.

Open Sunday, Monday and Wednesday 10 am-3 pm; Tuesday and Thursday 10 am-7 pm; Friday and the day before a Jewish holiday 10 am-2 pm; Saturday and Jewish holidays 10 am-4 pm. 40 NIS adults.

## Mount Herzl

Herzl Boulevard (Bet Hakerem)  
Jerusalem, Israel

**Phone:** 02-632-1515

<http://www.herzl.org>

Overlooking the Jerusalem Forest, Mount Herzl is Israel's principal national military cemetery and is named in honor of Theodor Herzl, who inspired and worked for the founding of Israel until his death in 1904. Herzl's own tomb is at the top of the hill. The Herzl Museum explores the life and work of the founder of modern Zionism and contains a replica of Herzl's Vienna study with his own library and furniture. Mount Herzl contains the graves of prime ministers Golda Meir, Levi Eshkol, Yitzhak Rabin and other important leaders. The large, somber military cemetery is adjacent, arranged by the different wars, including the War of Independence. It is much visited by mourners, and quiet, dignified comportment is requested.

Sunday-Thursday 8:30 am-6 pm, Thursday till 7 pm, Friday and the day before a Jewish holiday 8:30 am-1 pm. Reservations recommended. EFree access to cemetery. Museum 25 NIS adults.

## Museum of the Seam

4 Chel Handasa St.  
Jerusalem, Israel

**Phone:** 02-628-1278

<http://mots.org.il>

The Seam is the term used for the demarcation line between East and West Jerusalem, formerly a no-man's land between the areas of the city under Israeli and Jordanian rule between 1948 and 1967. This contemporary museum mounts thought-provoking exhibits about the nature of human conflict and coexistence.

Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, Thursday 10 am-5 pm; Tuesday 10 am-9 pm; Friday 10 am-2 pm. 30 NIS.

## Rockefeller Archaeological Museum

Sultan Suleiman Street, East Jerusalem  
Jerusalem, Israel

**Phone:** 02-628-2251

<http://www.imj.org.il/rockefeller/index.html>

Situated in a landmark building in East Jerusalem, this museum—run under the auspices of the Israel Museum—houses an extraordinary collection of antiquities unearthed in digs during the British Mandate Period (1920-48).

Open Sunday, Monday, Wednesday and Thursday 10 am-3 pm; Saturday and Jewish holidays 10 am-2 pm. Admission is included with a ticket to the Israel Museum (50 NIS).

## U. Nahon Museum of Italian Jewish Art

27 Hillel St., Downtown  
Jerusalem, Israel

**Phone:** 02-624-1610

<http://ijamuseum.org>

Housed in a former 19th-century hospice for pilgrims, the museum collects, preserves and presents objects pertaining to Jewish life in Italy from the Middle Ages to the present. Displays include ritual objects used in the synagogue, private articles for the observance of various holidays, household goods and documents. The museum's main attraction is the 18th-century synagogue brought from the community of Conegliano Veneto, near Venice—it is active to this day.

Open Sunday, Tuesday and Wednesday 10 am-5 pm, Thursday noon-7 pm, Friday 10 am-1 pm. 25 NIS.

## Wohl Archaeological Museum

1 HaKara'im St. (Jewish Quarter), Old City  
Jerusalem, Israel

This underground museum showcases fascinating remains of houses in the luxurious Upper City of the Second Temple period, with their fine mosaic floors and ritual baths dating from around 2,000 years ago. The museum also organizes tours of the Jewish Quarter and the Temple Mount.

Open Sunday-Thursday 9 am-5 pm, Friday 9 am-1 pm. 25 NIS combined ticket with the Burnt House.

## Yad Vashem

HaZikaron Road (Mount Herzl)  
Jerusalem, Israel

**Phone:** 02-644-3802

<http://www.yadvashem.org>

A must-see. On the edge of the Jerusalem Forest at the base of the Mount of Remembrance, this complex of museums is far enough from the street that you can't hear the traffic. The peaceful setting belies the power of this memorial to the more than 6 million Jews murdered during World War II. Yad Vashem, which literally means "a hand and a name"—the sense in Hebrew being simply "memorial"—has one of the world's most extensive archive collections on the Holocaust, with millions of written testimonies and thousands of photographs that comprehensively record, examine and explain the Holocaust.

The Holocaust History Museum presents the story of the Holocaust through films, photographs (including a few that will turn your stomach), written testimonies and authentic artifacts (piles of children's shoes, for instance). The Art Museum exhibits original drawings done during the Holocaust, often in concentration camps. But the most haunting place at Yad Vashem is the Children's Memorial: It's a dark, cavelike room lit only by flickering candles. Hundreds of hidden mirrors, however, reflect the candlelight around the room, making it seem like there are millions of candles—or twinkling stars—surrounding you. The effect is that of a planetarium's sky show, until you hear someone slowly reading the names of the 1.5 million children killed in the Holocaust.

Allow at least three hours for Yad Vashem.

Open Sunday-Thursday 9 am-5 pm (some parts of the site remain open until 8 pm Thursday), Friday and the day before a Jewish holiday 9 am-2 pm. Last entrance one hour before closing. Closed on Jewish holidays. Guided tours in English daily at 11 am. Free. Children younger than age 10 are not permitted, and parents may consider it unsuitable for children younger than about 14. Guided tours may be booked in advance for a fee of 400 NIS plus 12 NIS per person in the group.

## Nature

### Stalactite Cave Nature Reserve

Stalactite Cave Nature Reserve (about 30 mi/50 km west of Jerusalem, off Highway 3866)  
Beit Shemesh, Israel

The reserve's Sorek Cave contains stalactites and stalagmites in breathtaking shapes. Photography is permitted in the caves on Friday when there are no guided tours. Special taxis run to the reserve from Beit Shemesh, a 30-minute drive from Jerusalem. Organized tours also operate from Jerusalem (Egged Tours offers a half-day trip).

Open April-September 8 am-5 pm, October-March 8 am-4 pm. Closes an hour earlier on Friday and the eve of Jewish holidays. Last entry is 75 minutes before closing. 29 NIS adults, 15 NIS children.

## Neighborhoods & Districts

### Downtown West Jerusalem

Traditionally, the New City revolved around Zion Square (Kikar Ziyon), where the east-west Jaffa Road intersects with the diagonal Ben Yehuda Street; running north-south, King George Street joins Ben Yehuda Street and Jaffa Road to form the downtown triangle. With the completion of the light rail system in 2012, virtually all of Jaffa Road—from City Hall at Safra Square, opposite the Old City walls, to Davidka Square and the gentrifying Mahaneh Yehuda market—has been transformed into a giant pedestrian mall. The trend of pedestrianizing downtown thoroughfares has now extended from Ben Yehudah Street to nearby Agripas, HaHavatzelet and Shatz streets, making downtown shopping and dining experiences more relaxing.

### East Jerusalem

More than half Arab, East Jerusalem has a name that's slightly misleading. Its core lies immediately north of the Old City. East Jerusalem's business, commercial and hotel district begins at the Old City's north wall on Sultan Suliman Street between Damascus Gate and Herod's Gate. Nablus Road (Derech Shechem in Hebrew) runs north from Damascus Gate. Saladin Street starts at Herod's Gate and meets Nablus Road. The triangle formed by these streets encloses the heart of East Jerusalem. Because of the sometimes tense relations between Palestinians and Israelis, visits to this area of Jerusalem are best made in daylight hours.

## Ein Kerem

Just southwest of Jerusalem, Ein Kerem is a picturesque village where artists and writers love to live. Built in a valley that has nurtured olive and almond groves since biblical times, the village has beautiful old Arab houses—several have been turned into art galleries, restaurants and guesthouses. It's said that John the Baptist was born there. (St. John the Baptist Church, in the center of the village, marks the spot.) Two other biblical events, both involving Mary, took place in Ein Kerem. They're commemorated by the Church of the Visitation and the Spring of the Virgin, both on Ma'ayan Street. The huge Hadassah Medical Center on an adjacent hill is one of the world's best hospitals—treating patients from all over Israel and the Palestinian areas, too. It's also a tourist attraction for its world-famous stained-glass windows designed by the Russian-born Jewish artist Marc Chagall.

## Mea She'arim

Founded in 1874 and home to *haredim*—ultra-Orthodox Jews who live almost as their ancestors did for centuries—this neighborhood north of downtown is reminiscent of a Jewish ghetto, like so many of those that existed in eastern European cities before the Holocaust. Religious men still wear traditional dress and spend much of their time in the area's numerous small synagogues and study houses. You may be amazed by the number of children in the streets (ultra-Orthodox Jews usually have more than six children). Strolling through this neighborhood is a fascinating experience, but refrain from staring at the residents, be respectful and dress extremely modestly (women should wear long-sleeved shirts and long skirts).

## Nachlaot

One of the New City's oldest neighborhoods, Nachlaot has traditionally been home to a diverse mix of people. That diversity is reflected by its some 100 synagogues (there used to be 300) set up by various Jewish communities that populated the New City after leaving the walled city of Jerusalem in the late 19th century. Among them are Yemenite, Kurdish, Jerusalem Sephardi, Syrian Halebi, and Greek and Galician Jews. Today, the mix continues as veteran residents brush shoulders with hippie but religious Jews, bohemian students and yuppies living in renovated lofts and town houses. There are many trendy restaurants and cafes. Spanning the area between the lively Mahaneh Yehuda market, Gan Sacher Park and the more upmarket Rehavia neighborhood, a walk through Nachlaot's maze of streets and courtyards can take you back in time.

## Nahalat Shiva

Established in 1869, this was the third neighborhood built outside the walls of Jerusalem. The renovated area is now one of the most attractive entertainment zones in the city, with coffeehouses, excellent restaurants, galleries, pubs, shops and beautiful courtyards. Walk around there day or night. It's fascinating. Located east of Zion Square in downtown Jerusalem.

## Old City

Jerusalem's main attraction is still enclosed by the grand walls built in 1538 by the Ottoman Turk sultan, Suliman the Magnificent. The Old City within is a maze of narrow streets that's divided into four quarters: the Muslim Quarter, the Christian Quarter, the Armenian Quarter and the Jewish Quarter. Eight gates lead into the Old City. Jaffa Gate, at the end of Jaffa Road, is the main access from the New City. The Damascus Gate, the largest and considered the most beautiful of the gates, provides access from the East Jerusalem business section.

One of the most interesting ways to experience the Old City is from above. If permitted (sometimes sections, or the whole route, may be closed because of security concerns), take a walk around the

ramparts. From this vantage point, you can clearly see the architectural distinctions between the four quarters of the walled city. You can reach the ramparts from staircases near several of the gates.

Must-see sites in the Old City include the Western Wall, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the Citadel and, if the security situation permits, the Temple Mount. Another highlight is the Cardo, in the Old City's Jewish Quarter, which includes its landmark synagogues and a soaring commemorative arch. There you can also walk along the restored, partially colonnaded Cardo, the main thoroughfare of the ancient Roman city of Aelia Capitolina—peer through the shafts to view the actual ancient street level.

## Parks & Gardens

### University Botanical Gardens

Burla Street (entrance near the supermarket), Givat Ram  
Jerusalem, Israel

**Phone:** 02-648-0049

<http://www.botanic.co.il>

The beautiful Botanical Gardens and the Tropical Greenhouse, which are maintained by the Hebrew University, exhibit thousands of trees from many countries, rare flowers, streams and waterfalls. More than 60 varieties of birds flit through the gardens. There is a cafe by an artificial lake.

Sunday-Thursday 9 am-5 pm (till 7 pm in summer); Friday, Saturday and the day before a holiday 9 am-3 pm (5 pm in summer); Saturday and holidays 9 am-5 pm (6 pm in summer). Tickets must be purchased in advance for Saturday visits. 30 NIS adults, 20 NIS children.

### Wohl Rose Park

Eliezer Kaplan Street (between the Knesset, the Supreme Court and government offices)  
Jerusalem, Israel

This beautiful public park opposite the Knesset contains 12,000 rose bushes and 450 types of roses. It's the perfect place to take a long stroll.

Daily 24 hours. Free.

## Amusement Parks

### Mini Israel: The Holy Land in Model Form

Latrun (midway on the highway between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv)  
Jerusalem, Israel

**Phone:** 700-559-559

<http://www.minisrael.co.il>

This delightful educational and fun park has more than 350 minimodels of Israel's most important archaeological, religious and historical sites, at a scale of 1-to-25—from the Temple Mount to churches in Galilee. Allow two to three hours for this "edu-tainment."

Saturday-Thursday 10 am-5 pm (only open 5-10 pm in July and August), Friday 10 am-2 pm year-round. 69 NIS.

## Time Elevator

37 Hillel St., Beit Agron  
Jerusalem, Israel

**Phone:** 02-624-8381

<http://www.time-elevator-jerusalem.co.il>

This popular attraction takes you on an amazing ride through Jerusalem's 3,000-year history. The elevator is a cross between an IMAX film and an amusement-park ride in which visitors are taken back through time to the days when Jerusalem was conquered by King David to see how the city was built and how it came to be the city it is today. Shows are screened in eight languages. Children younger than 5 are not allowed.

Shows begin every 40 minutes. A monthly schedule is posted on the website. 54 NIS admission fee. Reservations are recommended; there is a discount for purchasing tickets online.

## Shopping

The mix of cultures in Jerusalem makes for varied and interesting shopping. The Armenian community is known for its art: Armenian pottery designs are world famous and are of the best quality. Check the Jewish Quarter in the Old City for the best selection of Judaica.

There are plenty of tacky souvenirs to be had, as well. Ben Yehuda Street has a nice variety of goods; the Arab market has great prices on postcards, antiques, religious trinkets, olive wood carvings and leather goods; and skin-care products from the Dead Sea that are said to be laden with revitalizing minerals are found at numerous locations.

If you're an antiques collector, Jerusalem is a treasure chest.

As one of the world's top diamond centers, Israel also has a lot to offer in the way of jewelry. A popular place to shop for jewelry is downtown on Jaffa Road and Ben Yehuda Street. The Cardo in the Old City's Jewish Quarter also has a good selection of top-quality jewelry, though the stores there mainly focus on Judaica.

There are attractive shopping precincts and a large mall in the suburb of Malha. In the city center, Mamilla Mall connects the Old and New City of Jerusalem from the Jaffa Gate to King David Street with upscale stores in renovated historical buildings.

**Shopping Hours:** The majority of stores are open Sunday-Thursday 9 or 10 am-1 pm and 4-7 pm (some remain open the whole day), Friday 8 am-2 or 3 pm or earlier. Shops in Muslim areas are generally open daily except Friday.

## Galleries

### Agripas 12

12 Agripas St.  
Jerusalem, Israel

**Phone:** 077-540-4897

<http://www.agripas12gallery.com>

This artists cooperative features contemporary Israeli artists' creations and special exhibitions



Monday-Thursday 4:30-7:30 pm, Friday and Saturday 11 am-2 pm.

### Artists House

12 Shmuel HaNagid St.  
Jerusalem, Israel

**Phone:** 02-625-3653

<http://www.art.org.il>

A popular center for exhibitions of Israeli and international artists.

Sunday-Thursday 10 am-1 pm and 4-7 pm; Friday 10 am-1 pm; Saturday 11 am-2 pm.

### Jerusalem House of Quality

12 Derech Hebron  
Jerusalem, Israel

**Phone:** 02-671-7430

<http://www.art-jerusalem.com>

Located in a historic building overlooking Mount Zion, the nonprofit Jerusalem House of Quality houses the studios of 25 local artists and displays their work. In the gallery you can find ceramics, jewelry, and works of wood and glass.

Individual gallery hours vary, but most of them are open 10 am-1 pm and 5-8 pm. Friday and Saturday 11:30 am-2 pm.

### Jerusalem Pottery

15 Via Dolorosa, Old City  
Jerusalem, Israel

**Phone:** 02-626-1587

<http://www.jerusalem Pottery.biz>

Stephan and Berge Karakashian's father and several other Armenian potters traveled to Jerusalem from Turkey in 1919 to repair the tiles covering the Dome of the Rock. Today, the brothers continue the family craft, offering beautiful tiles, which are on display.

Monday-Saturday 9 am-5 pm.

### Palestinian Pottery

14 Nablus Road  
Jerusalem, Israel

**Phone:** 02-628-2826

<http://www.palestinianpottery.com>

This East Jerusalem shop features a fine selection of pottery crafted by the Balian family, whose works have been exhibited all over the world, including Washington, D.C.'s Smithsonian Museum. *National Geographic* magazine featured the pottery in 1927. Check out the lovely hand-painted tiles showing Persian gardens, desert oases and Middle Eastern motifs.

Monday-Saturday 9 am-4 pm.

## Markets

### Arab Souk

This vibrant Arab market in the Old City sells all sorts of wares and souvenirs, but be forewarned: Never pay the asking price. Bargaining is expected. Generally, two-thirds of the original quote is a fair price to expect, and being willing to walk away (and actually doing so) can help knock the price down. Enter from Jaffa Gate or Damascus Gate.

It is open from early morning to sundown. Various stalls and shops close on Friday or Sunday, depending on whether they're owned by Christians or Muslims.

### Mahane Yehuda (the Shouk)

Jaffa Road  
Jerusalem, Israel

This lively Jewish market is bursting with the ripest and tastiest fruits and vegetables, as well as a multitude of household goods. But don't just go to shop: It is a Jerusalem experience that should not be missed, with inexpensive Jewish restaurants, and other cuisines from Iraqi to Moroccan to Kurdish. Note that bargaining is *not* the norm in the Jewish market—the asking price is generally the final price. It is busiest on Friday afternoon, when people are preparing for the Sabbath. If you can manage it, stop by Marzipan on Agrippas Street and order cinnamon or chocolate *rugelach*, a pastry.

Open Sunday-Thursday 6:30 am-7 pm, Friday 6:30 am-midafternoon.

## Shopping Areas

### Malha Shopping Mall

Malha  
Jerusalem, Israel

Arguably the largest shopping mall in the entire Middle East, the Malha Shopping Mall in the southwest district of the city is a magnet for Jerusalem residents and tourists alike. Three floors of commercial outlets offer everything from groceries to carpets, with plenty of fashion shops and shoe stores. The food court offers the usual fast food, but the mall also has a few upscale restaurants and coffee shops. Especially crowded on Saturday nights.

Open Sunday-Thursday 9:30 am-10 pm, Friday 9:30 am-3 pm, Saturday after Sabbath.

### Mamilla Shopping Mall

Jerusalem, Israel

<http://www.alrovmamilla.com>

This is an upscale pedestrian shopping street outside the Old City's Jaffa Gate. It's hard to believe that from 1948 until 1967, Mamilla was a war-torn neighborhood on Israel's border with Jordan. Today Hebrew- and Arabic-speaking shoppers browse international chains including Gap, Rolex, MAC, H. Stern, Nike, Polo Ralph Lauren, Nautica, bebe and Tommy Hilfiger, as well as Israeli shops such as Castro, Ronen Chen and Steimatzky books. Excellent restaurants include Cafe Rimon, Cafe Cafe, Roladin and Aroma. The Mamilla Hotel's rooftop restaurant has magnificent views of the Old City.

Sunday-Thursday 10 am-10:30 pm, Friday 9:30 am-2:30 pm.

## Specialty Stores

### Blue and White Gallery

1 Cardo St., Old City  
Jerusalem, Israel

**Phone:** 02-628-8464

<http://www.gift-museum.com>

This gallery, located on the shopping street the Cardo—the original Roman street through the Old City's Jewish Quarter—specializes in artwork by Chagall and some of Israel's finest artists, including Agam and Reuben Rubin, as well as the gallery's owner, Udi Merioz.

Open Sunday-Thursday 10 am-6 pm, Friday 10 am-2 pm.

### Gans

8 Yosef Rivlin St.  
Jerusalem, Israel

**Phone:** 02-625-1159

<http://www.gans.co.il>

This long-established downtown gift shop (it's been at the same premises since 1939) specializes in attractive Judaica and also sells Kakadu wood carvings and designs.

Sunday-Thursday 10 am-7 pm, Friday 10 am-2 pm.

### Gaya's Games

7 Yoel Moshe Solomon St.  
Jerusalem, Israel

Brainteasers, puzzles and games from this nationwide chain are crafted mostly from beautiful wood.

Sunday-Thursday 10 am-10 pm, Friday 9:30 am-3 pm, Saturday night (after the Sabbath) until 11 pm.

### G.R.A.S.

Malha Shopping Mall  
Jerusalem, Israel

**Phone:** 076-888-9448

<http://www.gras.co.il>

Part of a nationwide chain, this store—and its two additional Jerusalem locations—offers elegant but affordable silver and gold jewelry, often combined with precious stones and set in uniquely Israeli designs. Check out the ceramics, glassware, silk prints and wooden items—all hand-designed by leading Israeli artisans. Other locations are on Yoel Moshe Solomon Street in Nahalat Shiva and at 20 King George St.

Sunday-Thursday 9:30 am-10 pm, Friday 9 am-3 pm, Saturday after the Sabbath.

## H. Stern

23 King David St. (King David Hotel)  
Jerusalem, Israel

**Phone:** 1599-506-060

<http://www.hstern.net>

One of Israel's best-known jewelers offers magnificent earrings and necklaces. The international firm has shops at Mamilla Mall and additional outlets at the David Citadel and Inbal Jerusalem hotels.

Open Sunday-Thursday 9 am-6 pm, Friday 9 am-4 pm, Saturday 10:30 am-6 pm.

## Israel Coins and Medals Corporation

Mamilla Mall  
Jerusalem, Israel

This store carries special commemorative medals, watches, various framed memorabilia, and modern and ancient coins and jewelry.

Open Sunday-Thursday 10 am-10:30 pm, Friday 9 am-3 pm.

## Khalifa Shoes

44 Jaffa St.  
Jerusalem, Israel

**Phone:** 02-625-7027

<http://www.khalifashoes.com>

One of several stores selling trendy Noat shoes and sandals for men and women. The Israeli shoes originated in a kibbutz in the 1940s as work boots, eventually evolving into the fashionable styles of today with ergonomic insoles that fit the contours of the foot and flexible footpads of cork.

Sunday-Thursday 9 am-7:30 pm, Friday 9 am-2:30 pm.

## Padani's

Mamilla Mall  
Jerusalem, Israel

**Phone:** 02-500-4047

<http://www.padani.co.il>

This company designs beautiful jewelry and represents well-known international manufacturers and watch companies including Cartier, Breitling, Patek Phillippe, Bulgari, Panerai and Raymond Weil. Tax- and duty-free.

Open Sunday-Thursday 10 am-7 pm, Friday 9:30 am-1 pm.

## Dining

### Dining Overview

Day and night, many restaurants and cafes in Jerusalem are brimming with Israelis. Some restaurants are so excellent that Israelis from Tel Aviv travel to Jerusalem to eat. Many restaurants offer a business lunch, which includes an appetizer, main dish and drink, for a much lower price than what you'd pay off the regular menu. In some restaurants, the lunch hours run into early evening.

Trendy Emek Refa'im Road in the German Colony and Mamilla Mall are home to the most stylish cafes in the city, as well as numerous restaurants catering to a yuppie crowd. On Shimon Ben Shetah Street, pricier restaurants compete with one another not only in cuisine, but also for the best-dressed clientele. The Ben Yehuda pedestrian promenade and nearby Nahalat Shiva Yoel Solomon Street are packed with inexpensive to moderate cafes and restaurants serving local, Italian and American fare.

The Old City does not offer the exotic variety or quality of restaurants found in West Jerusalem, but this section of town does offer some cheap, excellent local cuisine. The best options there are lighter meals such as *shwarma* (roasted meat cut from a rotating spit) and hummus. No matter where you go, you're likely to encounter falafel, the national snack—a ground chickpea delicacy usually eaten in a fresh pita with hummus and salad.

Kosher restaurants follow Judaism's dietary laws. A kosher establishment that serves meat will not serve dairy products, and vice versa (though some dairy eateries will serve fish). Hence, the many dairy restaurants make Jerusalem a paradise for vegetarians. All kosher restaurants (and most others, too) close for the Jewish Sabbath from Friday sundown until Saturday evening.

Meal times are generally 8 am-noon for breakfast, noon-3 pm for lunch and 6-11 pm for dinner, though many establishments remain open between their prime lunch and dinner hours. Kosher restaurants open an hour after sundown on Saturday. (During the long days of summer, many kosher restaurants will not re-open on Saturday night.)

Security guards are part of the dining scene and, by law, every restaurant has one at the door. A security tax—usually 1 NIS-2 NIS per person—may be added to the bill.

Expect to pay within these general guidelines, based on the cost of a dinner for one, not including drinks or tip: \$ = less than 70 NIS; \$\$ = 70 NIS-100 NIS; \$\$\$ = 101 NIS-200 NIS; and \$\$\$\$ = more than 200 NIS.

### Local & Regional

#### Armenian Tavern

79 Armenian Orthodox Patriarchate Road (Armenian Quarter), Old City  
Jerusalem, Israel

This tavern with a museumlike display of Middle Eastern antiques is housed in a vaulted building that dates back to the times of the Crusaders. The Armenian chef offers the best of Armenian food: *lahmajun* (pizza with a very thin crust, topped with a meat sauce and cooked with tomato and Middle Eastern spices), *basturma* (a highly seasoned, air-dried cured beef), *soujouk* (a dry sausage with various spices including cumin, sumac, garlic and red pepper) and great salads, all served on hand-painted plates.

Open Monday-Saturday for lunch and dinner. Reservations recommended; a must on Friday and Saturday. \$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

## Azura

8 Mahane Yehuda  
Jerusalem, Israel

Dine like a member of the clan in this legendary eatery amid the hustle and bustle of Jerusalem's Mahane Yehuda market serving traditional Iraqi, Kurdish and Sephardic food. Meals made from scratch every day are slow-cooked in big pots and served at long tables, so there's no written menu, but the waiter will gladly recite what's bubbling on the stove for you. Great for families; lunch is the best time to go. Everything on the menu is kosher.

Daily for breakfast and lunch. \$\$\$. No credit cards.

## Caffit

36 Emek Refa'im St., German Colony  
Jerusalem, Israel

**Phone:** 02-563-5284

<http://8347960.rest.co.il>

This is one of the longest-established places in the trendy German Colony, now across the street from its original location. The menu is multicultural and authentically "Jerusalem." Sit on the patio and try the sweet-potato soup or the tasty focaccia breads and stuffed mushrooms. Kosher.

Open Sunday-Thursday for breakfast, lunch and dinner; Friday for breakfast and lunch; Saturday for dinner (after the Sabbath). \$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

## Colony

7 Beit Lechem Road (Baka)  
Jerusalem, Israel

This classy and hip restaurant and lounge is a hot spot among the city's "in" crowd. The brick and metal former hangar with lavish decor and stained-glass windows is adjacent to the renovated former train station compound and is now one of Jerusalem's most popular bar-restaurants. Its pan-Mediterranean menu is an upscale version of Israeli comfort food. It has great gazpacho. Not kosher.

Open daily from for lunch, dinner and late night. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

## Eucalyptus

14 Hativat Yerushalayim (the Artist Colony in Hutzot HaYotzer)  
Jerusalem, Israel

**Phone:** 02-624-4331

<http://the-eucalyptus.com>

One of Jerusalem's finest, most memorable dining experiences. The food is connected to biblical stories and the history of the land. Jerusalem-born Moshe Basson, who has won many international awards, does tableside presentations of his dishes, made with ingredients native to Israel. This culinary archaeologist searches for rare native plants to make into haute cuisine. Chef Basson's extraordinary menu changes with the season. Try the fig stuffed with chicken and covered with tamarind sauce and pomegranate seeds. Other popular standbys are the *ma'aluba* (a chicken, rice and vegetable casserole),

stuffed sage leaves and many variations of eggplant. The 10-course tasting menu is an excellent value: Go hungry. There is a fine selection of boutique Israeli wines. Kosher.

Sunday-Friday 6-11 pm. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$.

## Machneyuda

10 Beit Yacov St.  
Jerusalem, Israel

Lively, fun atmosphere and extremely popular—Israelis travel from Tel Aviv to eat at this restaurant (so do visiting celebs: Madonna was once sighted there). Imaginative food is fresh from the nearby Machne Yehuda market. The Mediterranean cooking is imaginative, yet home-style. Try the calamari in risotto. Desserts include *malabi* (like panna cotta) or semolina cake with tahini ice cream.

Saturday-Thursday for dinner only. The restaurant is not kosher, but it is closed on the Sabbath because of the neighborhood. Reservations are a must. \$\$\$.

## Sima

82 Agrippas St.  
Jerusalem, Israel

A Jerusalem landmark with a simple atmosphere. The feast at Sima is the Jerusalem grill: a mixture of chicken hearts and livers with small pieces of lamb, all seasoned to perfection and fried with generous amounts of onion and garlic. The grilled, skewered meats are excellent and are accompanied by tasty coleslaw, pickles, olives and Turkish salad. Kosher.

Open Sunday-Thursday for lunch and dinner, Friday for lunch only, Saturday for dinner (after the Sabbath). \$. Most major credit cards.

## Security

### Etiquette

To the uninitiated, Israel's fascinating mix of people and religions is amazing. The tiny country (about the size of New Jersey) is home to Jews from France to India to Ethiopia to Ukraine, so stereotypes are inaccurate. There are many faces of Israelis: Jews who look like Arabs; Arabs who look like Jews. Israelis have different skin colors—from pale to black. Most Israelis are fiercely modern; others are fervently religious Jews—and, of course, some are not Jewish. Just over 20% of the population consists of Arabs, mostly Muslims, with small, localized communities of Druze and Christians. Almost half of Israeli Jews are Ashkenazi (whose ancestors came from Europe); more than half are Mizrahi (whose families fled or left Islamic countries of the Middle East, central Asia or North Africa) or Sephardi (descended from Ladino-speaking families who fled Spain and Portugal during the Inquisition) or black Jews from Ethiopia.

**Appointments**—Punctuality is not strictly observed (except in the booming high-tech and medi-tech industries). Traffic is also getting to be a problem, making it hard to stick to a strict schedule. Don't expect Israelis to be available for meetings on Friday or Saturday; all Jews have the Jewish Sabbath (Saturday) day off, and most Jews have Friday off as well. Friday is the holy day for Muslims.

**Personal Introductions**—Many Israelis speak some English. Most businesspeople speak excellent English and are well-traveled internationally. Young Israelis tend to speak excellent English—even the latest slang, thanks to American TV, movies and the Internet.

If you're greeting a religious Jew or Muslim of the opposite sex, wait to see if your Israeli counterpart offers his or her hand. Strictly Orthodox Jews—male or female—may not wish to shake hands with someone of the opposite sex.

**Negotiating**—Relationships often are established over coffee or lunch and friendly—and very personal—conversations. An Israeli might question you about your family, politics, even your love life or salary. Do not be surprised or offended by direct talk and personal questions. In Israel, almost everyone has an opinion and is not shy about expressing it. However, there are certain opinions that it might be prudent for a foreigner not to express—such as criticism of Israel's defense forces, which are generally greatly admired throughout the country.

**Business Entertaining**—Expect to be entertained at the expense of your host. Likewise, when you are the host, you will be expected to carry the cost. Most Israeli Jews and Muslims are quite secular. But religious Jews and Muslims observe strict dietary laws, such as no pork products. Inquire about your guest's particular needs in advance.

**Body Language**—People often stand close to one another while conversing and often touch one another on the arm or back. Among Jews, especially the secular, there is a free and easy amiability, even innocent flirting. Remember, among Arab Israelis (as among many people in the world), the left hand is considered unclean. Use only the right hand to pass objects or to eat. You also need to be careful how you sit in the presence of Arab Israelis: Never expose the sole of your foot or shoe toward them. Do not use the "thumbs up" gesture, as it is perceived as obscene. Dress conservatively and do not adopt native modes of dress. Women in particular should be modest in their choice of clothing.

**Gift Giving**—Gifts are in order if you're invited to a home. Take flowers, pastries or chocolates. When visiting religious people, avoid gifts of nonkosher food, including chocolate and wine, because of the dietary laws. Gifts of alcohol are inappropriate only for religious Muslims. Most Israelis, regardless of their religion, appreciate a fine bottle of wine—but for religious Jews, it needs to be kosher.

**Conversation**—Among Jewish Israelis, conversation is forthright and outspoken. Heated debates are common, few subjects are off-limits, and they are likely to readily offer their opinions and expect one in return. However, be cautious when speaking to religious Jews or Muslims—some remarks may be in poor taste, such as praising Israel's lively gay scene or the great sweet-and-sour pork and shrimp dinner you enjoyed at a local restaurant. Israelis love discussing politics, but remember politics can be a hot-button issue. Be curious and expect many questions in return. Most Israelis enjoy lively discussions on most issues.

## Personal Safety

The crime rate in West Jerusalem is extremely low, and visitors can walk freely through most neighborhoods without the slightest hesitation, even at night. However, most of East Jerusalem, including religious sites on the Mount of Olives, should be approached with vigilance, and especially avoided by women on their own, even during daylight hours; orthodox religions usually frown on unaccompanied women in public. Visitors should take the usual commonsense precautions: Avoid public parks and quiet alleyways after dark, stick to well-lit streets, and avoid carrying open and loose purses.



In the past, major terrorist attacks occurred in Jerusalem, and there have been a few smaller attacks in recent years. As a result, Jerusalem is very security conscious. Security guards are positioned outside most restaurants, nightclubs, theaters, transportation centers, banks, hotels and hospitals, as well as at the entrances to shopping malls and large stores. Many locations also have metal detectors. Restaurants frequently charge a 1 NIS-2 NIS security surcharge. Security guards also travel on and patrol the city's bus lines. Travel today is very safe. Many more Israelis have died in traffic accidents than terrorist attacks in recent years.

Additional caution is advised when visiting the Arab neighborhoods of East Jerusalem. The Temple Mount occasionally is closed to visitors. Be especially careful in Muslim areas on Friday and religious holidays: Crowds occasionally become unruly.

Stay informed about security conditions. If this is your first trip to Jerusalem, consider traveling with a group or guide. Adhere to any warnings against travel to the West Bank, which is under the control of the Palestinian Authority. Absolutely avoid visiting the Gaza Strip, which is dangerous for foreigners and under the control of Hamas (the Islamic Resistance Movement).

For more information, contact your country's travel-advisory agency.

## Health

Tap water is drinkable, even though some locals prefer bottled water. Hygiene standards are very high. As long as you use common sense when choosing restaurants, food-borne illness shouldn't be a problem.

During the extremely hot, dry summer months, keep safe by staying hydrated and wearing sunscreen and a hat when outdoors.

Excellent health care is available in Jerusalem, with state-of-the-art emergency medical facilities at Hadassah University Hospital's two locations, in Ein Kerem (phone 677-7111) and on Mount Scopus (phone 584-4111), and at Sha'arei Zedek Hospital (phone 655-5111). <http://www.hadassah.org.il>.

English-speaking doctors are available at all hospitals and are on call for most hotels. Jerusalem is also served by Terem, a chain of clinics providing walk-in and emergency medical service. Phone 1599-520-520. <http://www.terem.com>.

Pharmacies are conveniently located throughout the city. Pharmacies take turns with late-night and weekend shifts; check local newspapers or ask your hotel concierge for the schedule. Larger countrywide pharmacy chains, including Super Pharm and Center Pharm, have branches in the city and at the major shopping centers.

In a medical emergency, dial 101.

For more information, contact your country's health-advisory agency.

## Disabled Advisory

Jerusalem has taken major steps to improve access for handicapped people. The law requires buildings open to the public to provide access for wheelchairs and people with certain other disabilities. Access Israel is a pressure group working with local government and big businesses for improved access to other buildings and public transportation, too. <http://www.aisrael.org>.

Most shops, restaurants and tourist sites have ramps for wheelchairs and wheelchair-accessible restrooms. However, some ancient sites cannot always be made accessible.

Wheelchairs and other medical equipment for the handicapped and the elderly are available from Yad Sarah. No fee is charged, but a returnable deposit is required. Transportation can also be arranged. 124 Sderot Herzl St. (near Sha'arei Zedek Hospital). Phone 02-644-4444. <http://www.yadsarah.org.il>.

## Facts

### Dos & Don'ts

Do try fresh-squeezed pomegranate juice, a specialty in food stalls along the Via Dolorosa in the Old City.

Do respect the customs and traditions of the Jewish, Muslim and Christian residents of religious neighborhoods.

Don't leave packages or suitcases unattended anywhere, and do mind security regulations at all public places.

Do greet Jews with "*shalom*" and Arab Muslims and Christians with "*salaam*" or "*marhaba*."

Don't refer to the Western Wall as the "Wailing Wall."

Do accept security procedures patiently and understand the reason for them.

Don't make crass, disparaging remarks about Israel's army or the country's efforts to protect itself.

Do remember that a large proportion of Israeli families have been personally affected by terrorism.

## Geostats

**Passport/Visa Requirements:** Citizens of Canada, Australia, the U.K. and the U.S. need passports but not visas and may be required to show proof of sufficient funds and onward passage. Reconfirm travel document requirements with carrier before departure. To prevent denial of entry when traveling to certain Arab countries, Israeli customs will not stamp passports unless specifically requested to do so by the visitor.

**Population:** 780,517.

**Languages:** Hebrew, Arabic (official languages); English, French and Russian (widely spoken).

**Predominant Religions:** Jewish, Islamic and Christian (mostly Greek Orthodox, Russian Orthodox and Ethiopian Orthodox).

**Time Zone:** 2 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (+2 GMT). Daylight Saving Time is observed from early April to late September.

**Voltage Requirements:** 220 volts.

**Telephone Codes:** 972, country code; 02, Jerusalem city code;

## Money

### Taxes

Tourists are exempt from paying the value-added tax (VAT) for accommodations, organized tours, car rentals and flights within Israel, but only when payments are made in foreign currency or with a credit card from a foreign bank.

In addition, tourists who purchase goods exceeding 400 NIS at shops posting a "Tax Refund—Tax Free Shopping" sign are entitled to a VAT refund at their points of departure. Exceptions to this rule include tobacco products, electrical appliances and photographic equipment. Ask for a special invoice when making purchases in order to present it at the VAT refund office.

### Tipping

A 18% value-added tax (VAT) will be added to your restaurant bill unless that restaurant is in a hotel where you have stayed overnight. Service charges of 12%-15% are generally added to the restaurant bill; if not, a tip of this amount—depending on the quality of the service—is normal.

Tipping taxi drivers is not expected, but gladly accepted when offered. Tour guides and their bus drivers usually expect tips. Hotel staff is appreciative when tips are left by happy lodgers.

## Weather

The weather in Jerusalem is more varied than most people think. Summers are usually hot and dry with temperatures reaching the mid-80s F/high 20s C most days.

Winter days can be surprisingly cool and wet—most of the rain falls November-April, and there is occasional light snow. Daytime highs are generally in the 50s F/11-14 C in the cooler months.

## What to Wear

If you visit in the summer, pack light, natural-fiber clothes. In the winter, take a warm jacket. An umbrella or rain gear is recommended if you plan on visiting December-February. To visit holy sites and religious neighborhoods, men will want to wear long pants and long-sleeved shirts, and women should wear pants or a calf-length skirt and long-sleeved blouse—in many cases you will be blocked from entering if you are dressed less modestly.

Regardless of when you visit, think of your feet as well. Well-cushioned shoes for walking are essential for the cobblestoned streets of the Old City. You also may want to take hiking boots if you plan to explore the surrounding hills.

Business attire is generally less formal in Israel than in Europe or the U.S., although more and more Israelis are wearing suits and ties. Smart casual is OK for business meetings in the summer; in winter, a sports jacket without a tie is fine.

## Limassol, Cyprus

### Overview

#### Introduction

Cyprus' second-largest city, Limassol's main attraction is Limassol Castle and its medieval museum. Other sights include the public gardens, a small zoo and an archaeological museum. It also has a busy music scene, with everything from bouzouki taverns to jazz. There are several points of interest nearby, and the coastal region to the east is scenic. Many fine hotels dot the coast between Limassol and Amathus, to the east. Nearby are the 13th-century Kolossi Castle (9 mi/14 km west of Limassol), the beach at **Dhassoudi**, the Ayios Georgios Convent and the Greco-Roman archaeological site of **Curium**, where plays and concerts are performed every summer in the ancient theater. Regional vineyards and wineries abound (there's a two-week wine festival in September), and you can use Limassol as a base to visit Troodos mountain villages. *40 mi/65 km southwest of Nicosia.*



#### Port Information

##### Location

Limassol is the main cruise port of Cyprus. It is located 3 mi/5 km from the city center and contains a duty free shop, tourist information center and a bank.

Most cruise lines offer shuttles into town, but it is also possible to take one of the taxis that line up outside the port entrance. Buses are available outside the port – take Bus 30 to the Limassol city center. Car rental offices are all in downtown Limassol; the companies charge extra to have a car delivered to the port.

## Rhodes Island, Dodecanese Islands

### Overview

#### Introduction

Only 20 mi/30 km from the Turkish coast and 260 mi/420 km southeast of Athens, Rhodes Island is popular with both vacationers and cruise passengers for its lively nightlife, excellent beaches, flowers, hills and historical sites. The island has a fairly active artists' colony, and it's not uncommon to come across a painter at work.



Much of its flavor and architecture arrived with the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, who occupied it 1310-1522. In the capital, Rodos, see the medieval quarter of Old Town (the wall that surrounds it is in great condition) and the Agios Nikolas Tower (at the harbor entrance), which may stand where the Colossus of Rhodes once stood.

Other sights include the archaeological museum in the 15th-century Hospital of the Knights and the 14th-century Crusader's Fortress (or Palace of the Grand Masters) with its beautiful furniture, marble and fifth-century mosaics from the island of Kos. Allow two hours for the palace, and if you're there April-October, attend the sound-and-light show, concerts and folkloric performances. If time permits, visit the Acropolis of Rhodes to see a theater, stadium and two temples.

About 20 mi/30 km southwest of Rodos is Kameiros, where you can find the remains of a Doric temple and a city begun in the third century BC. About 30 mi/50 km south of Rodos, near the town of Lindos, are the fifth-century-BC ruins of the Temple of Athena (well preserved) and some remains of even older temples on top of the Lindos Acropolis. You can get a wonderful view of the village and the Mediterranean from this point. In Lindos' harbor is the site where St. Paul is said to have shipwrecked on his way to Rome. Cars are banned from the streets of Lindos. Rooms and apartments are available in private homes, and hotels can be found just outside of town. Most of the large four- and five-star resort hotels are clustered within a 10-mi/16-km area from Rodos toward Faliraki in the southeast and Ialysos to the southwest. A stop in Lindos, a national historic landmark, is highly recommended.

Also take half a day to see the Valley of the Butterflies (about 15 mi/25 km south of Rodos, in the area called Petaloudes), one of the most dazzling parts of the island. The narrow valley with a stream in the center is especially spectacular June-September because of the foliage and rare butterflies. There are several other towns with ruins, beautiful beaches and fortresses. We think that four or five days on the island wouldn't be too much.

## Gythion, Greece

### Overview

#### Introduction

Pastel-colored homes tumble against each other along the hillside, welcoming visitors to a quaint view of the unspoiled Greece of yesteryear. This seaside town—which is not actually an island, though it seems like one—allows visitors a relaxing day or two to explore narrow, steep streets and delicious seafood restaurants.



#### Port Information

#### Location

Tenders carry passengers along a tight sea wall, and drop them off within a short walk from the central square. Head left from the drop-off and walk along the harbor until you reach the main street. There are plenty of restaurants and coffee shops along the harbor itself.

## Valletta, Malta Island

### Overview

#### Introduction

Valletta is Malta's delightful capital city and a World Heritage site. During a visit in 1830, British Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli described Valletta as "a city of palaces built by gentlemen, for gentlemen." Indeed, what better place to construct lavish buildings and store valuable objects than in a well-fortified city? Although defense was foremost in their minds, the Knights of Malta couldn't have chosen a more scenic spot for their headquarters: The hilly peninsula between two large natural harbors provides wonderful views in nearly every direction.



Valletta will be the European Capital of Culture in 2018, drawing attention not only to the city itself but to the islands of Malta, which, despite their beauty and proximity to Italy, don't get the attention they deserve.

Across the Grand Harbour from Valletta, on two narrow peninsulas, are the cities of Vittoriosa, Cospicua and Senglea, all of which predate Valletta (but were also heavily bombed during World War II). Locals call them Birgu, Bormla and Isla, respectively, and collectively they're referred to as the *Cottonera* (the Three Cities) because they are all enclosed on the land side by a double line of fortifications.

Of the three, Vittoriosa has the most to offer, including the Church of St. Lawrence, the Maritime Museum, Fort St. Angelo (a key defensive point during the Great Siege of Malta) and the Inquisitor's Palace. The Malta at War Museum documents the challenging ordeal Malta faced during World War II. All three cities have nice waterfronts with cafes and restaurants. Small boats can also be hired to ferry you back to Valletta.

Just outside of the gates of Valletta is the town of Floriana. Valletta's bus terminus is located there, as well as the Argotti Botanic Gardens—a nice place to stroll if you have some extra time.

To the northwest of Valletta, across Marsamxett Harbour, are three sprawling suburbs of interest: Sliema, St. Julian's and Paceville (pronounced *pa-che-ville*). Sliema is good for shopping, and St. Julian's and Paceville constitute Malta's prime nightlife district. In addition to the many bars and nightclubs there, you'll also find high-end hotels, scores of restaurants and pleasant seaside promenades and yacht harbors. Ferries link Sliema and Valletta, and Sliema is also the departure point for most island cruises.

## Port Information

### Location

The Valletta Waterfront, where cruise ships dock, is one of the nicest European ports. Check out the shops and restaurants at the waterfront or head to the city center, which is close but up a steep hill. You can take an elevator or enjoy the 15-minute scenic walk. Taxis wait at the entrance to the port, but the city is relatively small and easily accessible on foot.

## See & Do

### Sightseeing

Most visitors make a day trip to Valletta from the resorts, but the capital merits a longer stay or even repeat visits. Despite the relatively long list of sights to cover, take time to venture off the pedestrianized main street, Republic Street, and explore some of the side streets. When you're ready for a break, you'll find there are plenty of cafes and restaurants to choose from. Or just sit for a while in one of the parks that offer fantastic views, such as Upper Barakka Gardens, Lower Barakka Gardens and Hastings Gardens.

The highlight of Valletta's many museums and attractions is St. John's Co-Cathedral, the conventual church of the Knights of Malta. Its austere exterior masks lavish baroque decoration on the inside, in particular the paintings on the barrel-vaulted ceiling covering the nave, the colorful in-laid marble tombstones of the knights set in the floor, and the side chapels, each one decorated by a different *langue* (regional or language group) of the knights. The Oratory's altarpiece is considered the most significant work of art in the cathedral: Caravaggio's *The Beheading of St. John the Baptist*. The attached Cathedral Museum has more artworks on display (sacred vestments, Flemish tapestries, illuminated choral books). Audio guides are included in the price of admission.

A close second in terms of lavish ornamentation is the Grand Master's Palace. Although the building serves as the offices of Malta's president and parliament, on most days visitors can view several state rooms. The Armory (which can be visited separately or as part of a combo ticket) is definitely a highlight, with its unrivaled collection of military hardware from the 16th-18th centuries. The Knights of Malta lived in palatial inns, called *auberges*, according to their various regional origins. The finest is the Auberge de Castille et Leon, now the office of the prime minister (and therefore not open to the public). Government offices also occupy the Auberge d'Aragon and the Auberge d'Italie—they're worth seeing at least from the

outside. Fortunately, one of the *auberges* is open to the public: The Auberge de Provence houses the National Museum of Archaeology (interesting explanations of the various archaeological sites and displays of the artifacts unearthed there).

Another museum installed in a grand residence is the National Museum of Fine Arts. The core of the collection is formed by works previously displayed in the knights' palaces and churches. There are also pieces from subsequent periods by Maltese artists or artists somehow connected to Malta. Another favorite attraction is Casa Rocca Piccola, a 16th-century mansion that provides a fascinating insight into the lifestyle of the Maltese nobility. Performing arts are highlighted at two premier venues: the sumptuous Teatru Manoel (<http://www.teatrumanoel.com.mt>) and the St. James Cavalier Centre for Creativity (<http://www.sjcav.org>), housed in a cleverly converted military tower.

The 45-minute audiovisual show called the Malta Experience (<http://www.themaltaexperience.com>), available in 13 languages, provides a good overview of the islands' 7,000 years of history and culture. Heritage Malta offers two passes for the capital: the Valletta Museums Pass and the Discover Valletta Pass (includes an audioguide for the city). The Valletta Museums Pass can be purchased at any Heritage Malta site. The Discover Valletta pass can be purchased at the National Museum of Archaeology in Valletta or at any Heritage Malta site outside of Valletta.

## Mallorca Island, Balearic Islands

### Overview

#### Introduction

Situated 345 mi/555 km east of Madrid, Mallorca (pronounced *my-YOR-ka*) is the largest and most popular of Spain's Balearic Islands, drawing visitors from the colder climes of Europe. It's the only member of the archipelago that enjoys, and caters to, year-round tourism.



Its beaches, sunny weather and dazzling seaside scenery are the main attractions, though it retains a bit more of its traditional flavor than the Costa del Sol, another package-tour haven on the Spanish mainland. Most of the built-up, hotel-filled areas are around Palma Bay in the south, Alcudia Bay in the north, and along the island's cove-dotted east coast. In the center is a windmill-dotted plain called Es Pla that's home to several small towns and villages. In February, a virtual sea of pink and white blossoms from the 10 million almond trees fills this peaceful area of countryside.

The protected northwest area is, for many, the most beautiful of all. It has a long continuous mountain range that rises to 4,600 ft/1,400 m at its highest point. The mountain range towers above tiny hidden inlets, boasts silver-green groves of ancient gnarled olive trees, and shelters beautiful stone-walled towns and villages such as Valldemossa, Deia and Soller.

Palma de Mallorca is the largest and most cosmopolitan city in the Balearics. In spite of the massive popularity of the island (up to 5 million travelers visit each year), the capital has managed to retain much of its original charm and character. In fact, a recent Spanish poll voted it the country's most attractive city to live in.



## Port Information

### Location

Visitors to Palma de Mallorca will usually disembark at the Estacio Maritima cruise terminal, which is 4 mi/6 km from the city center. If the main port is busy, it is possible for cruise ships to dock at the industrial pier near the Porto Pi fort, which is about a mile/kilometer farther outside the city.

Most cruise lines offer a shuttle bus to transport visitors from the terminal to downtown Palma. If that is not an option, it is easy to take the public bus or hire a taxi if you're in a hurry.

## See & Do

### Sightseeing

#### Historic Sites

##### Almudaina Palace

Carrer del Palau Reial  
Mallorca Island, Balearic Islands, Spain

**Phone:** 971-214-134

<http://www.patrimoni nacional.es/Home/Palacios-Reales.aspx>

The Almudaina Palace was initially built as a Moorish fortress on the ruins of a Roman settlement, but was made the official royal residence of the conquering Christian king in the early 14th century. Today it remains the summer residence of Spain's royal family, providing stunning views of the Bay of Palma and the Palma Cathedral to common visitors and royal guests alike.

##### Banys Arabs (Arab Baths)

Can Serra 7  
Mallorca Island, Balearic Islands, Spain

This tiny 10th-century gem, with its archways, columns and miniature dome, is Mallorca's only surviving relic from the days of the Moorish occupation.

##### Basilica de Sant Francesc

Placa Sant Francesc 7  
Mallorca Island, Balearic Islands, Spain

**Phone:** 971-712-695

<http://www.seemallorca.com/sights/religious/basilica-de-sant-francesc-palma-de-mallorca.html>

Built in the 13th century, the Basilica de Sant Francesc is a must-see in Mallorca. The ornate interior, impressive tomb of missionary mystic Roman Lull, and collection of statues and monuments scattered through orange- and lemon-tree gardens are breathtaking. Be sure to check out some of the restaurants and shops behind the basilica once you're done touring.

## Bellver Castle

Calle Camilo Jose Cela  
Mallorca Island, Balearic Islands, Spain

**Phone:** 971-735-065

<http://castelldebellver.palmademallorca.es>

Bellver Castle has changed hands a number of times since it was built in 1311, and it currently resides in the city's possession. Home to a museum and cultural venues, the castle receives a vast number of visitors every year and hosts some of the finest public acts and concerts in the city. Be sure to check the website before you visit to see what's on the schedule during your trip.

## Cathedral of Santa Maria of Palma

Placa de l'Almoaina  
Mallorca Island, Balearic Islands, Spain

**Phone:** 971-723-130

<http://www.catedraldemallorca.info>

Construction on the Cathedral of Santa Maria of Palma, also known as La Seu, was started in 1229 on the site of the old mosque, but was not finished until 1601. It has endured several earthquakes and undergone several renovations, but it remains a magnificent work of architectural art that displays the best artistry from the Middle Ages up to the late 19th century. Give yourself several hours to explore and admire; there's a lot to take in.

## Museums

### Baluard Museum

Placa Porta Santa Catalina 10  
Mallorca Island, Balearic Islands, Spain

**Phone:** 971-908-200

<http://www.esbaluard.org>

Not to be missed is the terrace at the Baluard Museum, with stunning views of the port, castle and cathedral. Inside, an imaginative conversion has turned this former military bastion into an impressive museum of modern art. Explore the Aljub galleries—they used to be a freshwater reservoir and aqueduct system in the mid-17th century.

### Fundacio Pilar i Joan Miro

Carrer de Joan de Saridakis 29  
Mallorca Island, Balearic Islands, Spain

**Phone:** 971-701-420

<http://miro.palmademallorca.es>

Explore the old studio and home of renowned Spanish artist Joan Miro, which now houses more than 100 paintings, 25 sculptures and 3,000 studio pieces. Take your time browsing the impressive grounds, brimming with murals and artwork at every turn. The museum and the foundation that runs it are both meant to "inspire and delight."

## Museum of Spanish Contemporary Art (Colleccio March)

Sant Miquel 11  
Mallorca Island, Balearic Islands, Spain

**Phone:** 971-713-515

<http://www.march.es/arte/palma>

The Museum of Spanish Contemporary Art houses a permanent collection of 70 works by the most influential Spanish artists of the 20th century. Visitors can admire the art of Pablo Picasso, Salvador Dali and Joan Miro, as well as other contemporary artists in rotating exhibitions. Be sure to stop by the museum shop at the end of your visit and take a print of the famed pieces home with you.

## Palau March

Calle Palau Reial 18  
Mallorca Island, Balearic Islands, Spain

**Phone:** 971-711-122

<http://www.fundacionbmarch.es>

Located in Palau March palace, this stunning museum has an extensive sculpture and nativity-scene collection, as well as ancient manuscripts and a collection of 15th- to 17th-century nautical maps. Check out the cathedral views and the murals by Josep Maria Sert.

## Shopping

Mallorca has some great shopping, and it all starts at the Placa Major. Explore the small pedestrian side streets for specialty shops and boutiques, and then head up to Avinguda Jaume III. All the main shopping areas branch off from these two locations, so pull out your wallet and pick a direction.

## Galleries

### Centre d'Art Real

Cami de la Real 5, Palma  
Mallorca Island, Balearic Islands, Spain

This atmospheric gallery is located in a converted 13th-century mansion and features exhibits of works by both young and established artists.

### Dionis Bennassar

Carrer d'Antoni Maura 11, Pollenca  
Mallorca Island, Balearic Islands, Spain

**Phone:** 971-532-027

<http://www.galeriadionisbennassar.com>

This gallery has a regular program of eclectic exhibitions. If you're traveling north to Pollenca and Formentor, make a stop there on the way.

## Markets

A year-round craft market is held in the central Placa Major in Palma.

## Rastro

Avinguda Gabriel Alomar I Villalonga, Palma  
Mallorca Island, Balearic Islands, Spain

The flea market selling everything imaginable at (sometimes) bargain prices is a lively Palma shopping institution whose multifaceted stalls extend along on the city's ring road every Saturday morning. It's not to be missed.

## Shopping Areas

### Festival Park

Carretera Palma-Inca Km. 7.1  
Mallorca Island, Balearic Islands, Spain

**Phone:** 971-140-925

<http://festivalpark.es>

Close to the inland town of Santa Maria, this mall has a wide selection of shops, fast-food restaurants, cinemas and bowling alleys.

### Porto Pi

Passeig Maritim, Palma  
Mallorca Island, Balearic Islands, Spain

<http://portopicentro.es>

Located near the capital's waterfront, this shopping area has more than 100 shops as well as a food hall selling a range of gourmet products.

## Dining

### Dining Overview

We think Balearic cooking is reason enough for a trip to Mallorca. Among local specialties are *sopes mallorquines*, a vegetable and bread stew, and *tumbet*, a baked vegetable dish that layers potatoes, eggplant and squash. *Pa amb oli*, fresh bread topped with olive oil and tomatoes, is also a local treat. You won't find a lot of beef on restaurant menus on the island, but lamb, pork and rabbit are plentiful and are often used as ingredients in stew.

One of the best ways to sample both Mallorcan and traditional Spanish cooking is at a tapas bar. Tapas are small portions of just about anything: cheese, olives, squid, smoked shrimp, sausage, fried potatoes in a paprika sauce (*patatas bravas*) and marinated vegetables, just to name a few. Order enough little plates, and you will have a meal.

Of course, no meal is complete without a bottle of good Spanish wine. In supermarkets and restaurants there is always a good selection of *tinto* (red), *blanco* (white) and *rosado* (rose) wines, often at bargain

prices. Interesting Mallorcan wines are now produced in many small towns throughout the island. The most traditional and long-established vintages come from Binisalem (Jose L. Ferrer Bodegas).

Coffee is another favorite, and it comes in several different ways: *cafe solo* (espresso), *cortado* (an espresso with a drop of milk), *cafe con leche* (an espresso with a lot of milk) or *carajillo* (an espresso with a shot of brandy or rum). Spanish coffee is very strong. If you want a weaker cup, ask for *un americano*.

At the outdoor cafes, you may think that an awful lot of people are drinking milk. It's probably *horchata*, a cool, refreshing, nonalcoholic beverage made from a sweet root that originates from mainland Valencia. A local tippie you may want to sample is *palo*, a dark alcoholic aperitif made from a blend of sweet caramel and bitter *chinchona* bark. And Spanish hot chocolate (*chocolate*) will surprise you—it's so sweet and thick, you could almost eat it with a spoon.

In Mallorca, as all over Spain, lunch starts at 1:30 pm, and dinner often begins at 9 pm or later, especially in summer.

## Local & Regional

### Sa Premsa

Placa Bisbe Berenguer de Palou 8, Palma  
Mallorca Island, Balearic Islands, Spain

**Phone:** 971-723-599

<http://www.cellersaprensa.com>

This barn-sized, 1950s-built restaurant has a high ceiling, large circular wine barrels and pictures of old Palma on the walls. It serves traditional Mallorcan and Spanish dishes at a reasonable price.

## Security

### Etiquette

Spain has made steady economic progress and is a vital member of the European Union. Business travelers will find a moderately affluent country, in step with the age of high technology but still maintaining many of its traditions.

**Appointments**—You may find it valuable to have a local intermediary who can assist in establishing appointments. Schedule meetings well in advance. As a visitor, you should be punctual but anticipate that your hosts may be less prompt.

**Personal Introductions**—Handshakes are the typical greeting. Last names with the appropriate Spanish title are used. If your acquaintance has a professional title, you will learn it when introduced; if not, *senor* (male), *senora* (married female) and *senorita* (unmarried female) are appropriate. The title and the person's last name should be used until you are instructed otherwise.

Note that it is typical for Spanish people to have two surnames, one from their father and one from their mother. The father's surname will be given first during the introduction, and that's the name that is used to

address or speak of the person. Thus, "Senor Federico Garcia Lorca" would be addressed as "Senor Garcia." Dual-sided business cards—one side in Spanish, one in English—are appropriate.

**Negotiating**—Business is typically preceded by small talk and pleasantries. Negotiations can be a more extended process than in northern European countries. Companies tend to be hierarchical, so focus on those people of your equal rank or higher. At the same time, the opinion of everyone in the company is important. You are an outsider and must ingratiate yourself. Thus, expect many questions about your business, background and family. Intuition as much as objective fact is important in their impression of you, so remain warm and friendly in your demeanor. Anticipate that many of the people important to a decision may not be present in any given meeting.

**Business Entertaining**—Lunch and dinner are the meals most commonly attended by business associates. Lunch is usually more productive for deal-making, but the business discussions should be saved for the very end of the meal, during coffee. Know that dinner is usually served quite late—9 or 10 pm. Spaniards often fill the gap between lunch and dinner by snacking on tapas (appetizers) at cafes and taverns.

**Body Language**—Conversations take place at close quarters, and polite conversational touching may be practiced. Even in some business environments, it is common to greet and say goodbye to women by kissing them on both cheeks, but a man should allow the woman to initiate this.

**Gift Giving**—In business contexts, gifts are typically given at the conclusion of successful negotiations. Gifts should be opened and appreciated immediately. Appropriate personal gifts when visiting a home include flowers or chocolate, but avoid chrysanthemums, dahlias or 13 of anything.

**Conversation**—If you don't speak Spanish, try to learn at least a few phrases well. Spanish culture is always a good topic, as is Spanish literature if you are knowledgeable. Do not criticize bullfighting should the topic arise. Be aware that, in many regards, Spain is still a country of regions: Many people will identify more strongly with their local area than with the country as a whole.

## Personal Safety

In general, Spain is no more dangerous than other countries in western Europe, though travelers should exercise common sense and remain aware of their surroundings. Petty thievery is the most common threat for visitors. Pickpockets and purse snatchers are as common in Spain as in any other modern Western country. Always keep a hand on your purse or travel bag, especially at outdoor cafes. Never leave valuables in your car, and take a lock to secure your belongings if you're traveling by train.

In an emergency, dial 112 and ask for *policia* (police), *ambulancia* (ambulance) or *bomberos* (firefighters). This number can be dialed free of charge from any telephone, including cell phones.

For the latest information, contact your country's travel-advisory agency.

## Health

Mallorca has modern medical and dental facilities, but take along all prescription and nonprescription drugs you'll need for your trip—your brand names might be unfamiliar to some pharmacies in Spain.

In general, you can eat the food and drink the tap water without issue. The sun is quite strong, so take sunglasses, a hat and plenty of sunscreen. Be sure to take along a comfortable pair of walking shoes.

For more information, contact your country's health-advisory agency.

## Facts

### Dos & Don'ts

Do be careful where you light up. Spain's antismoking law bans smoking in enclosed public spaces, as is the case on the Spanish mainland and in most other European countries. This includes bars, restaurants, hotel lobbies, casinos, clubs, cinemas, theaters, office buildings, open-decked tourist buses and airports.

Don't expect the language to sound the same as it does in Mexico or many other Spanish-speaking countries. For instance, the letter *z* and the letter *c* within a word are pronounced as *th*. (For example, Ibiza is pronounced *e-BEETH-a*).

Do expect to get a lot of male attention if you're a woman traveling alone. The best response is no response at all—any attention given is likely to be misinterpreted.

Don't wear shorts in churches. In fact, it's best to save them for the beach. Spanish people generally dress well, especially in cities, and you will stand out as a tourist by wearing shorts, skimpy tops or other too-casual clothes.

Do take a siesta. Many museums, shops and businesses shut down for the afternoon siesta, generally 1-4 pm. It's an opportunity to refresh and recharge, as well as to avoid the hottest part of the day. If you must be out, wander quietly through residential streets during those hours.

## Geostats

**Passport/Visa Requirements:** Passports are needed by citizens of the U.S. and Canada. A tourist visa is not required for a visit of up to three months. Reconfirm travel document requirements with your carrier before departure

**Population:** 404,681.

**Languages:** Castilian Spanish (official) and Mallorquin (a variant of mainland Catalan that is widely spoken, especially in the villages and smaller towns).

**Predominant Religions:** Christian (Roman Catholic).

**Time Zone:** 1 hour ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (+1 GMT). Daylight Saving Time is observed from the end of March to the end of October.

**Voltage Requirements:** 220 volts.

**Telephone Codes:** 34, country code; 971, island code;

## Money

### Taxes

A value-added tax (called IVA) of 21% is added to the price of most goods and services. With a little paperwork, nonresidents from outside the European Union can obtain a tax refund for purchases made in Spain. To obtain the refund, you must spend more than 90 euros in a single store displaying a "tax-free" sticker. You won't get all the tax back, because part of it is retained as a commission.

You need to present three things to the VAT refund officer at the airport before departure to get a refund: the article you purchased, the receipt and a refund form (which must be picked up at the place of purchase). Note that only unused articles are eligible for a refund. If everything is in order, the VAT refund officer will give you a final form to be mailed in for your refund. (For your own convenience, see the VAT officer before checking your bags and have your purchases in an easy-to-reach place.)

Some larger stores have a streamlined process: They handle most of the paperwork and then mail the refund to you, sometimes minus a fee. Private VAT refund services, located at the airport, will give you an immediate refund minus a fee, which is usually a percentage of the refund.

If you are traveling to other countries in the European Union, you can claim your refunds only at your exit point from the EU. In other words, if you buy goods in Spain, then travel on to Portugal and France, and later depart the EU from Paris, you have to claim the VAT refunds from all three countries at the airport in Paris.

### Tipping

Although a service charge is usually included in the bill, for good service in a restaurant you can tip 5%-10% of the total amount. Taxi drivers expect a tip of 10% of the fare.

### Weather

April-June, September and October are the best times to visit. July and August are generally very hot, and it can be a bit cool in October at higher elevations. Sweaters are often needed for evenings.

Winter, though generally mild, can be rainy, foggy and windy. We think winter is on the cool side. The temperature drops dramatically at high altitudes.

### What to Wear

Spain is a conservative country. People dress stylishly and neatly. It's best to save shorts for the beach, and wear skirts, cropped trousers, fashionable long shorts or lightweight slacks elsewhere. Never wear shorts in a church.

The summer sun is intense, so take a hat, sunglasses and sunscreen to avoid overexposure. Take a light jacket or sweater with you for mornings and evenings in autumn and spring, and warmer clothes for the mountains or in the winter months. Above all, pack comfortable walking shoes.

For business, men should wear plain, conservative business suits and ties—dark colors in winter, lighter in summer. Women should dress conservatively in a business environment.



## Barcelona, Spain

### Overview

#### Introduction

Barcelona, Spain's second-largest city, is inextricably linked to the architecture of Antoni Gaudi. His most famous and unfinished masterpiece, La Sagrada Familia, is the emblem of the city.

Like the basilica, Barcelona takes traditional ideas and presents them in new, even outrageous, forms. And the city's bursts of building and innovation give the impression that it's still being conceived. Both the church and the city can be tough places to get a handle on, yet their complexity is invigorating rather than forbidding.



Since it hosted the Summer Olympics in 1992, Barcelona has been on the hot list of European destinations. The staging of the Universal Forum of Cultures in 2004 also raised the city's profile. Over the past decade, better infrastructure, increased cruise ship traffic and a reputation for gastronomic excellence have put Barcelona at the forefront of European city destinations. Such popularity may make it harder to land a hotel room, but it has only added to the sense that Barcelona is a place to visit as much for its energetic, cosmopolitan character as for its unique attractions and lively beach culture.

#### Highlights

**Sights**—La Sagrada Familia; La Pedrera; La Catedral (La Seu); Santa Maria del Mar.

**Museums**—Museu Picasso; Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya; Fundacio Joan Miro; Museu d'Historia de la Ciutat; Museu Maritim de Barcelona; Caixaforum.

**Memorable Meals**—Lunch at Escriba Xiringuito on the seafront; high-end Mediterranean fare at Tragaluz; fashionable, inventive dishes at Semproniana; Albert Adria's Nikkei cuisine at Pakta; creative, seasonal Catalan fare at Gresca.

**Late Night**—Flamenco at Los Tarantos; drinks and a view at Mirablau; wine at La Vinya del Senyor; dancing at Otto Zutz.

**Walks**—La Rambla, the Barri Gotic and the Born; along the waterfront; Montjuic; Park Guell; Collserola woodlands.

## Geography

Barcelona is a large city with many districts, but the most popular attractions are found in a handful of areas that, for the most part, flow into one another. Beginning on the waterfront, Port Vell (Old Port) encompasses the harbor area and Barceloneta, a neighborhood that was once home to fishermen and has been renovated. The Vila Olimpica (Olympic Village) lies just east of Port Vell; it has its own marina and dozens of bars, restaurants and night clubs. The Old Port, too, has undergone extensive renovation in the past decade or so and is now the city's seaside recreation area.

La Rambla, Barcelona's famous boulevard and almost a district unto itself, begins at Port Vell and extends inland to Placa Catalunya. La Rambla is the heart of the central city, and it forms the boundary between El Raval, the neighborhood to the west of the boulevard, and the Barri Gotic (the Gothic Quarter), which lies to the east.

The Barri Gotic, the oldest part of Barcelona, has many bars, restaurants, museums and historic sites. Adjoining it on the east side of Via Laietana are the old quarters of Sant Pere and La Ribera, with its fine medieval mansions and trendy shopping and nightlife around the old Born market (now closed to shoppers but preserved as a historic site).

Continuing inland from the Barri Gotic, you'll enter the Eixample, an upscale shopping and residential area, crisscrossed by wide avenues, where many of the *modernisme* buildings are located. Adjoining it to the northwest is the chic villagelike district of Gracia, which has many pleasant restaurants and eclectic shops and galleries. Beyond Gracia, the city climbs the lower slope of Mount Tibidabo.

Montjuic, a prominent castle-topped hill covered with parks, gardens and pathways west of Port Vell, is easily visible from the central city. Museums and other attractions are found on this high ground.

The renovated district of Poblenou is more detached from the other areas and is found on the beachfront farther to the east at the end of the T5 tram line.

## History

As with many places in Europe, Barcelona's history has much to do with invasions and conquest. The Romans founded the original settlement, named Barcino, in 133 BC, and the town was later held by the Visigoths, the Moors and the Christian Carolingian Empire under Charlemagne's son, Louis the Pious. In AD 988, Barcelona won independence from the Carolingian kings and became the dominant political and military force in the region of northeastern Spain later known as Catalonia—or Catalunya, in the native Catalan tongue. (Much of the city's character stems from the fact that it identifies itself more as part of Catalonia than of Spain.)

By the late 1400s, Catalonia was politically linked with other regions of Spain, but the region continued to enjoy autonomous rights and privileges until the early 1700s. That changed after the War of Succession, when Catalonia backed the losing side led by Archduke Charles of Austria. Spain's King Philip V abolished Catalonia's government and laws and made Castilian (Spanish) the language of official business, rather than Catalan. This was but one of many conflicts between Catalonia and the central authority of Spain.

By the late 1800s, Barcelona had become one of Spain's most industrialized areas, and the factories spawned significant wealth and a dynamic middle class. Industrial profits underwrote the *modernisme* movement in architecture—Barcelona's version of art nouveau that was spearheaded by architect Antoni Gaudi. The industrial riches did not trickle down to the working class, however, and radical movements—

especially anarchism—found willing converts in the city's poorer districts. A violent uprising in 1909 was a precursor to the upheaval unleashed by the Spanish Civil War in the late 1930s, when Barcelona was ruled by leftist trade unions for several years. The city remained a stronghold of the losing Republican cause until the end of the war and paid the price afterward. During the long reign of Francisco Franco (1939-75) the Catalan identity and language were viciously suppressed.

Catalonian home rule was restored after Franco's death in 1975, and the Catalan language was declared co-official with Castilian. Beginning in the late 1970s, a forward-looking urban policy was adopted in Barcelona, and the regeneration reached its peak in preparation for the 1992 Summer Olympics. Since then, its popularity as a tourist and recreation center has continued to grow.

Politically, the city and region have become increasingly detached from Madrid's centralist rule; in 2010, more than a million Catalans demonstrated in favor of independence from the rest of Spain. That same year their official abolition of bullfighting—effective from 2012—was in effect a further rejection of deep-rooted Spanish traditions.

## Port Information

### Location

Barcelona is an important stopping-off point for major cruise lines in the Mediterranean, and even the largest ocean liners can dock in its port.

Barcelona's port has six international passenger terminals clustered around Port Vell, the Old Port district at the foot of La Rambla, minutes away from the city's most important tourist attractions. These terminals are the busiest and most modern in the Mediterranean, offering many services, including currency exchange, duty-free shops, restaurants, Internet access points, bus stops and taxi ranks.

Large ferries connect the city to the Balearic Islands and all of the major Mediterranean ports. Phone 902-222-858. <http://www.apb.es>.

### Potpourri

Under Franco's regime, Catalan was forbidden in all forms—printed, written or taught. Now the city offers free courses to anyone who would like to learn it.

Although Antoni Gaudi created some of the most extravagant buildings ever made, he was a humble and religious man who rejected vanity in all its forms. When he was struck down by a tram in 1926, his clothes were so shabby that police assumed he was a vagrant. He died three days later in a hospital in the dilapidated Barri Xino district.

It has been estimated that to build the central spire of the Sagrada Familia, which will rise 560 ft/171 m high, the subterranean pylons would have to weigh 8,000 tons each for it to withstand an earthquake or gale-force winds of 100 mph/161 kph.

Barcelona's colorful Fiesta de Sant Medir, held in the Gracia district in early March and dating from Roman times, honors Saint Emeterio, or Sant Medir, the patron saint of broad beans. During the festivities, thousands of sweets are handed out to delighted children.

The name of Mount Tibidabo comes from the story of Christ's wanderings in the wilderness, when the Devil took him to a mountaintop and offered to give him all that he could see if Jesus would fall down and worship him. *Tibi dabo* means "I give" in Latin.

During Franco's reign, a supervisor known as "la Moral" watched over the dance floor at La Paloma concert hall and parted couples with his stick if they danced too close or tried to sneak a kiss.

The stadium on Montjuic, called Estadi Olympic, was intended to host the People's Olympics in 1936, but Franco's coup the day before the scheduled opening kicked off the Spanish Civil War and put an end to the games. Catalans had to wait till 1992 when, in the newly refurbished stadium, Montjuic hosted the Summer Olympic Games that made Barcelona internationally famous.

## See & Do

### Sightseeing

Sooner or later, you must take a walk down La Rambla, Barcelona's famous thoroughfare, so you may as well make it sooner. It's a great introduction to the city, and it will put you in good position to see other nearby attractions.

If you head northeast from La Rambla, you'll enter the twisting, ancient streets of the Barri Gotic (Gothic Quarter). Find your way to the grandiose La Seu cathedral as you explore the district. Nearby is the Museu d'Historia de Barcelona (City History Museum). The Barri Gotic also holds several other treasures, so you may want to plan more than one day in the area. The highlights are the Museu Picasso (get there early to avoid the lines) and another magnificent Gothic church, Santa Maria del Mar. It's fun just to amble through the streets, however, especially in the evening, when you can sample many restaurants and bars in the contrasting Raval (earthy-international) and Born (avant-garde chic) districts.

You'll need at least a day to take in the famous sights from the *modernisme* movement in architecture. Before you start, stop in the tourist office in Placa Catalunya (and other locations), where you can get maps, a guidebook and discount vouchers to the city's 115 *modernisme* monuments. For more information, visit <http://www.rutadelmodernisme.com>.

Begin at Manzana de la Discordia, on Passeig de Gracia in the Eixample district, where you can see three adjacent buildings designed by the best-known architects of the movement. Next, head a few blocks north to Antoni Gaudi's amazing building La Pedrera (or Casa Mila), which houses residential apartments, offices and an exhibition center. Plan at least two hours to see them and to walk around among the rooftop sculptures. From the roof, you'll be able to see the spires of Sagrada Familia in the distance, and that's your next stop. (You can walk there in a leisurely half-hour jaunt or catch the metro's Blue Line at the Diagonal Station near La Pedrera.) Close out the day at Gaudi's intricately surrealistic church. Be sure to go up in the spires for a vertigo-inducing look at the church and the city. A visit to Gaudi's Parc Guell, on the northern side of the city, is also recommended, though you will probably have to fit it into another day. An hour-long audio tour of Gaudi's Barcelona is available for free from the official tourist authority website and can be downloaded to your mobile phone or MP3 player. It also contains information about the buildings, complete with photographs and maps. <http://www.barcelonaturisme.com/wv3/en/page/1464/mobile-apps.html?>

Montjuic, the hill rising southwest of the city center, merits a day of its own. Both the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya and Fundacio Joan Miro are found on Montjuic, as are several less cultural and more hedonistic attractions, including Poble Espanyol (a theme "village" incorporating architectural styles from all over Spain and a host of shops and restaurants), the Olympic stadium and Pavello Barcelona. Just strolling around this multifaceted green area is pleasant, and it offers some splendid panoramic views of the city and the Mediterranean coastline. Figure your route ahead of time, however, as Montjuic covers a lot of territory and the attractions are widely spaced.

## Historic Sites

### El Born Centre de Cultura i Memòria

Placa Comercial 12  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-256-6851

<http://www.elbornculturaimemoria.barcelona.cat/el-centre>

Dating from the late 1800s, the old iron marketplace in El Born district was for a century the city's principal wholesale market. A decade ago the authorities started to dig underneath its foundations with the aim of turning the space into a library. What they found—a swath of urban remains dating from 1714, the year the city was under siege during the Spanish War of Succession—prompted them instead to turn the space into a memorial. The archaeological ensemble can be seen via an elevated floor, and there is an exhibition that explains the on-going significance of this historic battle.

Daily 10 am-8 pm. Free.

### Hospital de la Santa Creu i Sant Pau

Sant Antoni Maria Claret 165, Eixample  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-556-5775 for information regarding guided tours

<http://www.santpau.cat>

Designed by Domènec i Montaner, one of the most renowned architects of the *modernisme* movement, this unusual hospital complex was built between 1902 and 1930. Located on the site of the old Santa Creu Hospital, which dates from 1401, the Hospital de Sant Pau is the largest single example of Catalan *modernista* architecture. Packed with sculptures and mosaics, it is a UNESCO World Heritage site. The site no longer receives patients (new medical facilities have been built close by), and after an extensive and masterful restoration the site's various pavilions accommodate cultural events and associations. You are free to wander around the grounds, though a guided tour is the best way to see the dazzling interiors.

There are guided tours in English daily at noon and 1 pm. 10 euros admission, 16 euros for a guided tour.

### La Catedral (La Seu)

Placa de la Seu 3, Barri Gòtic  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-428-262

<http://www.catedralbcn.org>

The heart of the Old City, this Gothic monster (with the imposing and mostly unused formal name of Església Catedral Basílica de Barcelona) was mostly built between 1298 and 1448 on the site that once held a Roman temple and later a mosque. The facade was not completed until the 1890s, and some feel that its neo-Gothic style is jarring, although it looks nice illuminated at night. Very spacious and soothing, the interior is notable for its volume, with three naves of almost equal width. The crypt of Barcelona's first patron saint, martyr Santa Eulàlia, lies behind the altar. You can see some of the older furnishings in the church's Sala Capitular (Chapter House Museum). Above all, don't miss the open-air cloister with its gently splashing fountain and restful garden patrolled by white geese. You can also visit the rooftop terrace for a close-up look at the towers and views over the Gothic quarter.

Cathedral open Monday-Friday 8 am-12:45 pm and 5:15-7:30 pm, Saturday and Sunday 8 am-noon and 5:15-8 pm. Cloister open daily 8:30 am-12:30 pm and 1-5:45 pm. Cathedral admission is free; elevator to the roof is 3 euros. An all-inclusive ticket is 7 euros.

## La Pedrera

Provenca 261-265, Eixample  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 902-400-973 or 93-484-5164 (for group reservations)

<http://www.lapedrera.com>

Built between 1906 and 1910, this large apartment building is one of Antoni Gaudi's masterworks. Its official name is Casa Mila, but it's better known as La Pedrera (the Quarry), a reference to its stony exterior appearance, with balconies that look like caves. Though Sagrada Familia is the Gaudi building that draws the biggest crowds, we think La Pedrera gives a better sense of the architect's astounding designs. It is also a UNESCO World Heritage site. The complex includes residential apartments, offices and an exhibition center.

Daily tours of the Espai Gaudi (loft and roof) and the Pedrera Apartment of Caixa Catalunya are available November-February 9 am-6:30 pm and March-October 9 am-8 pm (last tours of the day 30 minutes before closing). Individuals can rent audioguides and purchase tickets online; groups of 10 or more must book a guided tour in advance. 16.50 euros adults, 4 euros audioguides.

## La Rambla

This tree-dappled avenue is the heart, soul and central hub of Barcelona, not to mention a world-famous thoroughfare lined with remarkably diverse architectural styles. Although it is technically five streets (Rambla de Santa Monica, Rambla des Caputxins, Rambla de St. Josep, Rambla d'Estudis and Rambla Canaletes), the separation has not been clear for at least two centuries, and all are generally referred to as La Rambla. At least once during your visit, you should plan to stroll its full length, from Placa Catalunya to the statue of Christopher Columbus presiding over the port. Throughout the day and night it surges with people and offers a variety of amusements. Street performers line the boulevard, the most common being the human statues of one sort or another. You may see mimes and jugglers. There are also flower vendors, and lots of outdoor cafes where you can take a seat and watch the informal parade flow past you. The end near the port has an open-air artisan market where you can find attractive gifts and souvenirs from 10:30 am till dusk on Saturday and Sunday.

## La Sagrada Familia

Carrer de Mallorca 401, Eixample  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-208-0414

<http://www.sagradafamilia.cat>

The amazing Templo Expiatorio de la Sagrada Familia, to give it its full name, has to be seen to be believed. Even then it's hard to comprehend. The foundation stone was laid in 1882, and Antoni Gaudi worked on the building for more than 40 years, leaving it unfinished when he died in 1926. It remains unfinished, though work continues amid controversy: What few plans and models Gaudi left behind were destroyed or badly damaged at the outset of the Spanish Civil War, and those directing the current work are more or less guessing at the architect's intentions. You'll have no trouble distinguishing the portions that are pure Gaudi and those that are more recent additions, based on the color and condition of the stonework. Nonetheless, it's a must-see for all visitors to Barcelona (expect big crowds). Additions include color mosaics as well as materials such as carbon fiber, which did not exist during Gaudi's lifetime but are

needed today to make the structure earthquake-proof. Upon completion, the building will nearly double in height.

Start your visit in the church, then take an elevator that ascends one of the massive church spires for a great view of the city and the ongoing church construction that is expected to be finished in 2026. Also, don't miss the Gaudi House Museum located in the basement of the Passion facade. The museum focuses on Gaudi's works, especially emphasizing his work on the church.

Daily April-September 9 am-8 pm, October and March 9 am-7 pm, November-February 9 am-6 pm. Basic admission 15 euros adults.

## Manzana de la Discordia

Passeig de Gracia 43 (between Consell de Cent and Arago), Eixample  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-216-0306

<http://www.casabatllo.es>

The name translates to "Block of Discord," a reference to the three contrasting *modernista* buildings that stand close together along Passeig de Gracia. On the southern corner is Domenech i Montaner's ornate Casa Lleo Morera. A few doors up, at No. 41, is the intriguing geometric Casa Amatller by Puig i Cadafalch, which is open for guided tours and has an library and exhibition space dedicated to historic Spanish photography. Next door, at No. 43, is Antoni Gaudi's wonderful fairy-tale Casa Batllo with its carnival-mask balconies—a building that would look more at home in Disneyland than it does on a busy city street. See it at night, when it sparkles under lights. You can visit Casa Batllo using self-guided audio tours.

Casa Batllo daily 9 am-9 pm; Casa Amatller daily 11 am-6 pm. Casa Batllo 23.50 euros adults; Casa Amatller 15 euros adults.

## Palau de la Musica Catalana

Carrer Palau de la Musica 4-6, Barri Gotic  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 902-475-485

<http://www.palaumusica.org>

Another *modernista* landmark, this one was designed by Domenech i Montaner and built around the beginning of the 20th century. It's now a UNESCO World Heritage site, as well as a focal point for the city's classical music scene. Although it's impressive from the outside, try to take a tour or see a performance at the hall so you can get a look at the magnificent stained-glass ceiling and other interior design elements.

Guided 50-minute tours in English are offered daily on the hour 10 am-3 pm (till 6 pm in August). Times are subject to change because of concerts and other events. Tours are 18 euros adults. Buy tickets online or at the box office daily 9:30 am-3:30 pm.

## Pavello Barcelona

Ave. Francesc Ferrer i Guardia 7, Montjuic  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-423-4016

<http://www.miesbcn.com>

The current Barcelona Pavilion (also known as the Mies van der Rohe Pavilion) is an exact replica of the German architect's influential work of modern architecture, originally built in 1929 for the International Exposition. (Don't confuse modern with Barcelona's *modernisme* style, which is known as art nouveau in most of the world.) The pavilion's stark, simple lines are a forerunner of many architectural designs in subsequent decades: It looks a lot like libraries and other public buildings from the 1960s. The pavilion is small, and there's not a lot to see inside except Mies van der Rohe's famous Barcelona chairs (which the caretaker won't let you sit on).

Daily 10 am-8 pm. 5 euros adults.

## Santa Maria del Mar

Placa de Santa Maria 1, La Ribera  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-310-2390

<http://www.santamariadelmarbarcelona.org>

This soaring Catalan Gothic church sits in the heart of the medieval city's maritime district. Designed by the architect Berenguer de Montagut, this structure is considered by many to be Barcelona's most beautiful church. The foundation stone was laid to celebrate the conquest of Cerdena, which completed the Catalan domination of the region. Its relatively swift construction, between 1329 and 1384, made for an unusual unity of style. The interior, too, is uplifting in its exquisite simplicity and elegance, partly because its baroque trappings were burned during the Spanish Civil War. It also has perfect acoustics and serves as a wonderful setting for concerts and choir recitals, especially during the evenings when it's all lit up. Guided tours are available and include a trip to the rooftop.

Monday-Saturday 9 am-1 pm and 5-8:30 pm, Sunday 10 am-2 pm and 5-8 pm.

## Museums

### CaixaForum

Ave. Francesc Ferrer i Guardia 6, Montjuic  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-476-8600

<http://www.fundacio.lacaixa.es>

This is a cultural center that has one of the most important contemporary art collections in Spain, containing more than 700 permanent works that represent the evolution of contemporary art. One of the most famous works is *Schmerzraum*, an installation made of sheets of lead, iron and silver, by Joseph Beuys. Many international artists such as Donald Judd, Jannis Kounellis, Bruce Naumann, Gerhard Richter and Sigmar Polke are also represented. Concerts, artistic and literary conferences, and various other activities take place regularly in the museum building, which dates from 1909 and is considered a work of art itself. A media library, bookstore and restaurant are also available to visitors.

Open daily 10 am-8 pm, till 11 pm Wednesday in July and August. 4 euros adults.

### Camp Nou Experience

Carrer d'Aristides Maillol 12, Les Corts  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-496-3600



<http://www.fcbarcelona.com>

Essential for soccer fans: The museum presents the history of the FC Barcelona team (also known as Barca) with audiovisuals, glittering trophies, and an amazing assortment of shirts, photos and stadium models. A visit to the museum lets you gaze upon the hugely impressive Camp Nou stadium and also visit Barca's ice-skating rink. Arrive early, and it's recommended to purchase tickets in advance.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-6:30 pm (till 8 pm April-October), Sunday and holidays 10 am-2:30 pm. 23 euros adults.

## CosmoCaixa

Carrer d'Issac Neuton 28 (Metro: Avinguda Tibidabo or Vallcarca)  
Barcelona, Spain

A large, hands-on science museum that is great for the whole family. You can explore the Amazon, space in 3-D, evolution and more. You could spend hours discovering science through the many displays and interactive labs.

Tuesday-Sunday 10 am-8 pm. 4 euros adults, free for children younger than 16.

## Fundacio Antoni Tapies

Arago 255, Eixample  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-487-0315

<http://www.fundaciotapies.org>

In addition to a broad collection of the late Catalan artist's work, the foundation also mounts temporary exhibitions focusing on contemporary artists. It's housed in a restored landmark of *modernista* architecture, formerly the offices of a publishing company.

Tuesday-Sunday 10 am-7 pm. 7 euros adults.

## Fundacio Joan Miro

Parc de Montjuic s/n, Montjuic  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-443-9470

<http://fundaciomiro-bcn.org>

One of the world's largest collections of Joan Miro's work, including paintings, graphic work, drawings, sculptures and tapestries. They're housed high above the city on Montjuic hill in a Mediterranean-style building with galleries that are bathed in natural light. Climb to the roof terrace for some great views. The Fundacio also stages temporary exhibitions, screenings, seminars and concerts in its vocation as a platform for contemporary culture. There's an on-site restaurant that serves delicious Mediterranean dishes in a garden courtyard.

Tuesday-Saturday 10 am-7 pm (till 8 pm April-October and till 9 pm on Thursday), Sunday and holidays 10 am-2:30 pm. Main museum admission is 12 euros adults. Audioguide is 5 euros. Free guided tour of the permanent collection Thursday at 1 pm.

## G Experiencia

Larrard 41 (near Park Guell)  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-285-4440

<http://www.gaudiexperiencia.com>

That's G as in Gaudi. It would be easy to dismiss this as a Gaudi theme park, but the interactive exhibits and 4-D audiovisual experience (the fourth dimension is provided by moving chairs in the screening room) are actually an informative and entertaining presentation of Gaudi's life and creative output.

Daily 10 am-7 pm (till 5 pm October-March); last 4-D show 30 minutes before closing. 9 euros adults.

## Museo de Cera de Barcelona

Passatge de la Banca 7  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-317-2649

<http://www.museocerabcn.com>

Housed in a 19th-century neo-Renaissance building at the bottom of La Rambla, Barcelona's wax museum boasts 350 life-size figures. A blend of famous historical and fictional characters can be found in various settings designed to depict typical scenes of contemporary and historical life.

Monday-Friday 10 am-1:30 pm and 4-7:30 pm, Saturday and Sunday 11 am-2 pm and 4:30-8:30 pm. Open 10 am-10 pm nonstop during the summer. 15 euros adults. Audioguide is 3.50 euros.

## Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona

Placa del Angels 1 (Metro: Universitat)  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-412-0810

<http://www.macba.cat>

Often referred to as MACBA, this museum showcases works by contemporary artists the world over, but it's the museum building that often gets attention. Designed by U.S. architect Richard Meier and opened in 1995, the dazzling white structure is the flagship of the ambitious renovation of the Raval district. Inside, the museum has lots of natural light and ramps for walking ease. Various temporary exhibits augment the main collection.

Late June-late September: Monday, Wednesday and Thursday 11 am-7:30 pm; Friday 11 am-10 pm; Saturday 10 am-10 pm; Sunday and holidays 10 am-3 pm. Late September-late June: Monday and Wednesday-Friday 11 am-7:30 pm, Saturday 10 am-9 pm, Sunday and holidays 10 am-3 pm. Admission 8 euros adults. Free guided tours in English on Monday at 6 pm, Wednesday-Friday at 4 and 6 pm, Saturday at 4 pm.

## Museu de la Xocolata

Carrer del Comerc 36, La Ribera  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-268-7878

<http://www.museuxocolata.cat>

This museum presents Barcelona as you've never seen it before: made out of chocolate. The Olympic stadium, Gaudi's buildings and other Barcelona landmarks are all formed from the intoxicating sweet stuff. An initiative of the Provincial Guild of Pastry Chefs and City Hall, the museum is housed in the old Sant Agusti convent (suitably equipped with arctic-level air-conditioning to prevent Barcelona from melting). The museum also whisks you through the history of the "bitter drink" of the Aztecs and enlightens you about chocolate as medicine, food and aphrodisiac. And, of course, there's a scrumptious cafe and shop with consumable chocolate.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-7 pm, until 8 pm in the summer, Sunday 10 am-3 pm. 6 euros adults.

### Museu del Disseny (DHUB)

Place de les Glories Catalanes 37-38, Eixample  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-256-6800

<http://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/museudeldisseny>

The city's ambitious new Design Museum gathers together collections previously on show in smaller museums across the city. Visitors get to ponder over the value and impact of design in everyday life through viewing objects, furniture and gadgets that have been made in Spain. The costume collection is a catwalk through the ages, from medieval garb to contemporary brands such as Desigual, whilst the graphic art collection exposes Spain's strong heritage in poster and commercial art. There are *modernista* pieces too; furniture and artifacts from the city's art nouveau heyday.

Daily 10 am-8 pm. 6 euros adults.

### Museu del Modernisme Catala

Balmes 48, Eixample  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-272-2896

<http://www.mmcat.cat>

All things *modernisme*: painting, sculpture, stained glass, furniture, and other applied and decorative arts. Temporary exhibitions and lectures as well.

Tuesday-Saturday 10:30 am-7 pm, Sunday 10:30 am-2 pm. 10 euros adults.

### Museu d'Historia de Catalunya

Placa da Pau Vila 3, Port Vell  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-225-4700

<http://www.mhcat.net>

A lively, interactive overview of the history of Catalonia is housed in a restored port building. Artifacts, hands-on exhibits, audiovisuals and animated models reconstruct the social and human complexity of each period. Guidebooks in English are available. A restaurant, 1881, is located on the fourth floor which has a rooftop bar offering impressive views of the city. A gift and book shop are also on-site.

Tuesday and Thursday-Saturday 10 am-7 pm, Wednesday 10 am-8 pm, Sunday and holidays 10 am-2:30 pm. 4.50 euros adults, free on the first Sunday of each month.

## Museu d'Historia de la Ciutat

Placa del Rei s/n (Palau de Mar), Barri Gotic  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-256-2100

<http://museuhistoria.bcn.cat>

This institution is actually a collection of museums. The main branch incorporates the ensemble of monumental buildings on Placa del Rei. The underground levels there reveal fascinating subterranean layers of the city's ancient history, including some remains from the Roman colony Barcino. An entire ancient street and a fourth-century Christian basilica are also preserved just where they were discovered during city excavations in the 1930s. Exhibits on the upper floors chart later developments in Barcelona.

The different spaces have different opening times but they are generally Tuesday-Saturday 10 am-7 pm (until 8 pm April-September), Sunday and holidays 10 am-8 pm. 7 euros adults, free after 3 pm on Sunday.

## Museu Egipci de Barcelona

Valencia 284  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-488-0188

<http://www.museuegipci.com>

This museum specializes in ancient Egyptian culture and is home to the Fundacion Clos collection, which has 700 original artifacts in its possession. The main focus is on the pharaohs and their concept of life after death. In addition, visitors can enjoy theatrical re-enactments of ancient Egyptian cultural life and various temporary exhibitions featured throughout the year.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-8 pm in summer, 10 am-2 pm and 4-8 pm in winter; Sunday 10 am-2 pm. There are free guided tours in Spanish Saturday at 5 pm. 11 euros. Special prices apply to theatrical presentations.

## Museu Europeu d'Art Modern

Barra de Ferro 5, El Born  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-319-5693

<http://www.meam.es>

The collection in this lovely restored 18th-century neoclassical palace focuses on figurative art in paintings and sculpture from the 19th century to the present day.

Tuesday-Sunday 10 am-7 pm. 9 euros adults.

## Museu Frederic Mares

5 Placa de Sant Iu  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-256-3500

<http://w110.bcn.cat/portal/site/MuseuFredericMares>

This museum was created around the collections donated to the city by sculptor Frederic Mares in 1946. He continued adding to the collection throughout his lifetime. In addition to an extensive Hispanic

sculpture collection and many of Mares' own works, the museum also contains photographs, fans, pipes, jewelry, clocks, toys, pharmacy bottles, gargoyles, opera glasses and other ephemera that give an insight into 19th-century customs and lifestyles.

Tuesday-Saturday 10 am-7 pm, Sunday 11 am-8 pm. Admission is 4.20 euros.

## Museu Maritim de Barcelona

Avinguda de les Drassanes s/n, Port Vell  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-342-9920

<http://www.mmb.cat>

This is one of Barcelona's most popular museums, housed in the breathtaking Drassanes (Royal Shipyards), which date from the 1200s. Original and replica boats showing the changes in sea travel over the centuries and photographs depicting the shoreline of Barceloneta as a turn-of-century fishing village are just a few of the interesting items on display.

Daily 10 am-7:30 pm. General admission 7 euros adults, free after 3 pm on Sunday.

## Museu Monestir de Pedralbes

Baixada del Monestir 9 (Metro: Reina Elisenda or Palau Reial), Pedralbes  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-256-3434

<http://www.bcn.cat/monestirpedralbes>

The Royal Monastery of Santa Maria de Pedralbes was founded in 1326 and is a splendid example of Gothic forms and structures. In addition to the church, visit the three-story cloister and the Chapel of Sant Miquel with its 14th-century murals. The infirmary, vaulted refectory, kitchen, and everyday objects and furniture give you the feel of what life used to be like in a convent. In fact, the adjacent building is still home to a community of nuns.

The church can be visited for free daily 11 am-1 pm. Hours for the other buildings are Tuesday-Friday 10 am-5 pm, Saturday 10 am-7 pm, Sunday 10 am-8 pm April-September; Tuesday-Friday 10 am-2 pm, Saturday and Sunday 10 am-5 pm October-March. Last entry 30 minutes before closing. 7 euros adults.

## Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya

Palau Nacional  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-622-0376

<http://www.mnac.cat>

Located in the Palau Nacional (Montjuic), this museum (often referred to as MNAC) includes one of the world's most important collections of Romanesque art, including delicate murals rescued from the walls of tiny mountain churches in Catalonia. It also exhibits Gothic, Renaissance and baroque works. The interior of the palace, built for the International Exhibition of 1929, was partially remodeled by Italian architect Gae Aulenti in the early 1990s. The museum's front steps (or the rooftop for 2 euros) offer a spectacular view of the city.

Tuesday-Saturday 10 am-6 pm in winter and 10 am-8 pm in summer; Sunday and holidays 10 am-3 pm. 12 euros adults; audioguide 3.50 euros per person. Temporary exhibitions require a separate fee; combined tickets for permanent and temporary exhibits available. Free on the first Sunday of each month.

## Museu Picasso

Montcada 15-23, La Ribera  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-256-3000

<http://www.museupicasso.bcn.cat>

The museum's focus is on the early formative years of Pablo Picasso (1895-1904), many of which were spent in Barcelona. The collection includes drawings, representational and cubist paintings, and works from the artist's Blue and Pink Periods, housed in five adjacent medieval palaces. One of the highlights is the collection of interpretations that Picasso did of Velazquez's *Las Meninas*.

Tuesday-Sunday 10 am-7 pm (Thursday until 9:30 pm). 11 euros adults, 4.50 euros for temporary exhibits. Free on the first Sunday of every month and every Sunday after 3 pm. Tickets can be purchased in advance online, which saves time waiting in lines.

## Poble Espanyol

Ave. Francesc Ferrer i Guardia 13, Montjuic  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-508-6300

<http://www.poble-espanyol.com>

The name translates to Spanish Village. Built for the International Exhibition of 1929, it is an open-air museum that includes replicas (often on a smaller scale) of buildings, squares and bridges found throughout the country. It was revamped for the 1992 Olympics and turned into a local nightlife hot spot with numerous bars and restaurants. It's still open in the daytime, however, and has an arts-and-crafts center with more than 40 workshops where you can view and purchase traditional goods. Numerous children's activities and concerts are also held frequently on-site.

Monday 9 am-8 pm, Tuesday-Thursday and Sunday 9 am-midnight, Friday 9 am-3 pm, Saturday 9 am-4 pm. 12 euros adults.

## Neighborhoods & Districts

### Barri Gotic

The Gothic Quarter is the oldest portion of Barcelona, a warren of narrow streets on the northeast side of La Rambla. It was originally the site of the Roman settlement and the area later encompassed by the medieval walls. Now it's one of the city's most interesting districts, packed with shops, bars and restaurants, many of them occupying centuries-old buildings. Sights of note include the cathedral, a number of museums and surviving bits of Roman walls. The nerve center of the old city, Placa Sant Jaume, goes back to Roman times, when it formed the intersection of the north-south and east-west roads. It's an excellent starting point from which to explore the rest of the Gothic Quarter.

Farther to the east you'll find the La Ribera and El Born areas. Several of the handsome old mansions there now house museums, including the Museu Picasso. Nestled between Parc de la Ciutadella and Via Laietana, El Born offers an eclectic mix of designer fashion outlets and small artisan shops for you to explore during the day, and plenty of bars, restaurants, nightclubs and terraces to sample at night.

## Eixample

This area of the city was first built in the mid-1800s after the medieval walls were demolished and Barcelona was allowed to expand. The Eixample (pronounced *eye-SHAAM-pla*) was laid out according to a plan drawn up by top local planner Ildefons Cerda and is made up of a uniform grid of avenues with the corners of each block "flattened" or pushed in to make a hexagon out of a square—it's easy to identify on maps. The Eixample quickly became a fashionable residential and shopping area (which it remains). It's the prime area in which to view the buildings of the *modernisme* movement. At the western edge of the Eixample is the Parc Joan Miro, with palm trees and the colorful totemic landmark of Miro's *Woman and Bird*. It's especially pretty when lit up at night.

## El Raval

On the opposite side of La Rambla from the Barri Gotic, El Raval once had a reputation as a famous red-light district (also known as the Barrio Chino, or Barri Xino), and although today street walkers still parade, there are far fewer of them than before. The area has undergone extensive revamping, making it a fascinating mixture of the old and the ultramodern. One of Gaudi's buildings, the Palau Guell, lies just a half block off La Rambla. Many fashionable bars and restaurants are also in the area, attracting a young, bohemian crowd, and its range of down-to-earth eating spots is the most ethnically varied in the whole city. Toward the port, the neighborhood can still be a bit dicey at times, however, so be cautious if visiting after dark.

## Gracia

Stroll up the Passeig de Gracia, cross the Diagonal, and you're in Gracia on the northern edge of Eixample, formerly a town in its own right before it was swallowed by Barcelona's growth. Turn into the warren of narrow streets and enjoy a more private Barcelona with an atmosphere of its own. The district is characterized by independent design, and art and cinema movements, and is home to myriad specialist shops, trendy bars and restaurants. You can find old-fashioned herbalists and junk shops as well as stylishly renovated stores, superb delicatessens and two municipal food markets. Placa del Sol and Placa Rius i Taulet are the main squares where you can enjoy a drink on a cafe terrace. The nightlife, which attracts people from all over town, centers on Carrer Verdi. The area is also famous for its spectacular street parties and celebrations in August.

## Montjuic and Poble Sec

You'll need at least a full day to enjoy all that this landmark hill, the largest green area in the city, has to offer. It has a prominent castle, museums, various parks and botanical gardens, and the stadium and other facilities used in the 1992 Olympic Games as well as Poble Espanyol, a village that includes facsimiles of buildings from throughout Spain. Numerous ways of getting up the hill include escalators, buses, cable cars and a funicular train. At the foot of Montjuic, Poble Sec is a cozy, cul-de-sac of a neighborhood fast garnering a reputation for eclectic tapas bars and cafes.

## Port Vell

Moll d'Espanya del Port Vell s/n  
Barcelona, Spain

The old port area, which surrounds the point where La Rambla meets the sea, doesn't appear old: It has been the site of renovation in recent decades. The statue of Columbus at the foot of La Rambla makes a convenient starting point for exploring this area. (Take the small elevator to the top to get your surroundings in perspective.) Nearby, in the old royal shipyard building, is the Museu Maritim de Barcelona. To the northeast is La Barceloneta, the traditional fishermen's district and home to the best

seafood restaurants in town. For practical purposes, La Barceloneta can be thought of as part of Port Vell, although it's really a totally different district with a character all its own.

## Vila Olimpica

The area of the Olympic Village was once a wasteland of derelict factories, railroad tracks and warehouses, vestiges of its former glory days as a thriving industrial zone. Today, it's a stylish residential district. With its fountains and gardens, shopping malls and cinema complexes, it is also a popular leisure space for locals and visitors alike. It includes 2.5 mi/4 km of beach and the Port Olympic, packed with restaurants, bars and discos. On Sunday, it seems as if the whole of Barcelona is down in the Vila Olimpica area; the restaurants are crammed then, so if you can see it on another day, you'll enjoy a quieter and more relaxing visit.

## Parks & Gardens

### Parc de Cervantes

Ave. Diagonal 706  
Barcelona, Spain

On the edge of the city and stretching to the foothills, this luxuriant park is a favorite haunt of bikers and joggers. It has children's play areas, a pine-shaded picnic area and some vintage olive trees. The rose garden has more than 10,000 plants, which flower at different times April-November.

Daily 10 am-6 pm December-February, 10 am-7 pm March and November, 10 am-8 pm April and October, 10 am-9 pm May-September.

### Parc de la Ciutadella

Passeig Pujades and Passeig Picasso, La Ribera  
Barcelona, Spain

Charmingly old-fashioned in its geometric layout, the Parc Ciutadella is leafy and restful, yet filled with surprises such as the flamboyant waterfall and fountain (whose designer was assisted by the student Antoni Gaudi), the sculpture of the dainty *Lady With the Umbrella* by Roig i Sole, rare trees and a boating lake (boat rental is 10 euros). Originally a citadel built in 1715 to keep Barcelona in line after the War of the Spanish Succession, this area was handed over to the city in 1869 and turned into a park. Barcelona started on its cosmopolitan journey when the park was chosen as the site for the Universal Exhibition of 1888, the gateway to which was the Arc de Triomf (Triumphal Arch). Still standing is the Castell dels Tres Dragons, the original cafe-restaurant built for the Exhibition, along with the Hivernacle (conservatory) and the shady Umbracle (tropical hothouse). The southeast end of the park is taken up by the zoo.

Daily 8 am-6 pm.

### Park Guell

Olot 7  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-409-1831

<http://www.parkguell.cat>

Gaudi's dreamland creation and now a UNESCO World Heritage site, Park Guell has been painstakingly restored and is a must-see. It was originally planned as a housing development, but only a few buildings were completed, including the gingerbread gatehouse. Some of Barcelona's most famous visual symbols are in the park: Gaudi's mosaic dragon (or lizard), the monumental plaza with its colorful serpentine



bench made in *trencadis* (interwoven fragments of multicolored ceramic) and fabulous views of the city. The park stretches up the hill, with twisting paths through the woods.

Monumental Plaza open daily 8 am-9:30 pm May-October, 8 am-8 pm late March to late April, 8:30 am-6 pm late October to early March. Last entry 30 minutes before closing. Free admission to the park; monument section is 8 euros adults; 5.50 euros adults for the Gaudi House-Museum, where the architect spent the last 20 years of his life (museum closes earlier than the park).

## Amusement Parks

### Parc d'Atraccions del Tibidabo

Placa Tibidabo 3-4

Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-211-7942

<http://www.tibidabo.cat>

This amusement park is perched on Tibidabo, the summit of the Collserola Range, amid whose high woodlands you can enjoy a pine-scented breather from the congestion in the city below. The thrills include a roller coaster and some rides that date from 1901. The park also has a spectacular view of the city. The unique Museu d'Automates is a collection of old fairground machines.

Park hours vary depending on the time of year and day of the week—consult the website to confirm hours. Entrance and unlimited rides 28.50 euros adults.

## Wineries, Breweries & Distilleries

### Miguel Torres

M. Torres, 6, 08720

Vilafranca del Penedes, Spain

**Phone:** 93-817-7400

<http://www.torres.es>

A 30- to 40-minute bus or car ride west of the city takes you to the wine-producing town of Vilafranca del Penedes and Torres, Catalunya's top bodega. There, for a small fee, you can learn how wine is made (and ask lots of questions); multimedia presentations are offered along with a physical tour through working vineyards. Wine tastings and a shop are also on-site.

One-hour tours in English available Monday-Friday at 10 am, 1 and 3 pm; Saturday at 10 am and 3 pm; Sunday at 10 am. 8.50 euros adults.

## Shopping

The industrious Catalans have often been dubbed a nation of shopkeepers, and Barcelona does have a staggering number of shops of every kind and in every neighborhood. Barri Gotic and El Raval, in particular, have many quirky little shops with long family traditions, struggling for survival in the face of rising rents, malls and big-name merchants. A little shopping time spent around Placa Catalunya will introduce you to El Corte Ingles department store and El Triangle shopping mall.

Large or small, many of the city's merchants play to the city's love of design. In clothes, look for Catalan designers such as Antonio Miro and Adolfo Dominguez, and large stores such as Mango, Zara and Desigual (which is less expensive than in other European cities). Leather shoes, bags, wallets and belts

can be particularly stunning and a good value. Some of the best choices are the Spanish brands: Loewe, Yanko, Farrutx and Camper. Even if you never set foot in a store, you'll get to appreciate the city's sense of style by strolling past elaborate window displays.

Food and drink are also highly prized in Barcelona and make good souvenirs. Stock up on olives and cheese (ask to have it vacuum packed or *sous vide* for overseas travel) at La Boqueria market on La Rambla, cold-pressed virgin olive oil in OroLiquido, and Spanish wine at a large grocer such as Colmado Quilez. If you don't mind carting (or shipping) heavy parcels home, treat yourself to an earthenware cooking pot, a cast iron *plantxa* or the more portable ceramic tapas dishes and metal paella pans.

To guide you through this cornucopia, the city has mapped out various routes that (<http://barcelonashoppingline.com>) link the different shopping areas, and also happen to be dotted with many of the most interesting tourist sights. The Barcelona Card pass will give you a discount at a number of shops on the route: They're identified by the Shopping Line logo—four colored diamonds in a white circle within a blue circle.

**Shopping Hours:** Generally, Monday-Saturday 9 or 10 am to 1:30 or 2 pm and 4:30 or 5 pm to 7:30-9 pm. Neighborhood food stores and bakeries generally open around 8 am, have a long break at lunch and are open again 5-9 pm. The department stores, shopping malls and many of the larger stores on the main shopping streets stay open at lunchtime and until 10 pm. In summer, many shops close on Saturday afternoon. Sunday opening is regulated, though open to debate: The big stores and malls are allowed to open on around 10 Sundays each year, including the four Sundays before Christmas. Otherwise, you'll mostly find only convenience stores and gift shops open on Sunday. The exceptions are the Maremagnum shopping center at the port-end of the Las Ramblas, and a smattering of small boutiques in El Born, El Raval and the Barri Gotic.

## Department Stores

### El Corte Ingles

Placa Catalunya 14  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 901-122-122

<http://www.elcorteingles.es>

Spain's most emblematic department store, where you can find anything and everything. The huge branch in Placa Catalunya is the most convenient for Barcelona visitors. It can get uncomfortably crowded, but tired shoppers can take a breather and enjoy the view from the rooftop cafeteria. Around the corner of Portal de l'Angel is a branch specializing in sports and leisure.

Monday-Saturday 9:30 am-9:30 pm.

## Markets

### Els Encants Vells

Ave. Meridiana 69 (Metro: Glories)  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-246-3030

<http://www.encantsbcn.com>

A wondrous assortment of junk and jumble awaits at Barcelona's well-loved flea market. Selection and prices are best early in the morning.

Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday 9 am-8 pm (although the main activity occurs until 3 pm).

## La Boqueria

La Rambla 91, Raval  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-318-2017

<http://www.boqueria.info>

Also known as Mercat de Sant Josep, this is the oldest and most marvelous of Barcelona's 40 bustling municipal food markets. It absolutely should not be missed, and with its location just off La Rambla, it's not likely you'd accidentally pass by. Loaded with stall after stall of fresh fruit, fish, meat and vegetables, it's full of bright colors and exotic smells. Of particular interest are the egg stall, with not only chicken but other unique types of eggs, and the stalls with chorizo, jamon iberico and *butifarra* sausages. Seek out the Pinotxo bar for a breakfast of tasty coffee and churros. Great tapas are served all day in the many bars inside.

Monday-Saturday 8:30 am-8:30 pm (Monday is not the best day to visit because a large number of stalls are closed).

## Mercat se Santa Caterina

Ave. de Francesc Cambo 16  
Barcelona, Spain

Smaller and much less crowded than La Boqueria is this market in the La Ribera district. It was designed by renowned architect Benedetta Tagliabue, and its wavy roof covered in colorful mosaics has become a landmark in the district. Inside, it's a typical food market with plenty of fresh meats, cheeses, fruit and vegetables to choose from; there's a few restaurants within the market, too—don't leave before you've eaten at Cuines de Caterina.

Monday-Saturday 7:30 am-3:30 pm.

## Shopping Areas

### Diagonal Mar Centre Comercial

Ave. Diagonal 3 (Metro: El Maresme/Forum)  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-567-7637

<http://www.diagonalmarcentre.es>

If you happen to be in the Forum area of Sant Marti, visit this new indoor shopping center containing many familiar brands such as United Colors of Benetton, Desigual and Intimissimi. There are also places to grab a snack, as well as a post office and cinema.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-10 pm.

## El Triangle

Placa Catalunya 1-4  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-318-0108

<http://www.eltriangle.es>

A smart mall in Placa Catalunya, with a combination of small shops and big-name stores such as Sephora, Urban Outfitters and FNAC.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-10 pm.

## Las Arenas

Gran Via de les Corts Catalans 373-385 (Metro: Espanya)  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-289-0244

<http://www.arenasdebarcelona.com>

Modern shopping mall built into a historic bullfighting ring still visible from the outside; it's worth the visit just for the unique experience. Inside the shops vary, from cosmetics to clothing to food stores and include restaurants, a movie theater and a rooftop terrace with panoramic views.

Daily 10 am-10 pm.

## L'illa

Ave. Diagonal 557  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-444-0000

<http://www.lilla.com>

Housed in the unmistakable white building known as the Recumbent Skyscraper, this elegant and airy commercial center has numerous fashion shops and boutiques, a food market, an FNAC department store, lots of superb little stalls, coffee bars, eateries and a huge branch of the Caprabo supermarket.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-9:30 pm.

## Maremagnum

Moll d'Espanya 5 (Metro: Drassanes), Port Vell  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-225-8100

<http://www.maremagnum.es>

At this Port Vell shopping center, you'll find Mango, H&M and other popular chain stores, as well as shops catering to families, a Barca shop, and several coffee shops, tapas bars and restaurants.

Open daily 10 am-10 pm; restaurants open until 1 am.

## Specialty Stores

### Biosca i Botey

Carrer Girona 148, Eixample  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-238-7373

<http://www.bioscabotey.es>

There are a lot of lamp stores in Barcelona (part of the city's love of design), but this one's a standout. It has a stylish inventory, from the trendiest little designer lamp to the weird and wonderful, with studio lighting and an antiques department, too. You probably won't take a lamp home with you, but it's impossible not to be lured in by the glowing colors and shapes you'll see in the window.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-2 pm and 4:30-8:30 pm.

### **Cacao Sampaka**

Consell de Cent 292, Eixample  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-272-0833

<http://www.cacaosampaka.com>

Purveyors of eye-catching, high-quality artisanal chocolate goodies. Chef Albert Adria is one of the investors, so you know the flavors will be unique.

Monday-Saturday 9 am-9:30 pm.

### **Caelum**

Carrer de la Palla 8, Barri Gotic  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-302-6993

<http://www.caelumbarcelona.com>

Everything sold there has been produced by monks and nuns in Spanish monasteries. In the cafe downstairs, you can sample such culinary delicacies as cakes, cookies, sweets, honey, marzipan, wines and spirits.

Open Monday-Thursday 10:30 am-8:30 pm, Friday and Saturday 10:30 am-11 pm, Sunday 10:30 am-9 pm.

### **Camper**

Pelai 13-37, Eixample  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-302-4124. For the other locations, phone 93-217-2384

<http://www.camper.com>

Footwear is fun at this cheerful shop, which has elevated Mallorcan peasant sandals into a fashion trend with international appeal. Flat-soled and wedge styles come with round toes, bold stripes and bright colors and designs. Other options range from sturdy leather shoes to plastic boots to funky high heels. Also at Rambla de Catalunya 122 and other locations.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-10 pm.

### **Can Ravell**

Arago 313, Eixample  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-457-5114

<http://www.ravell.com>

A good spot to go foraging for local food products, like ham and other cured meats, cheeses, prepared dishes, canned goods, and the shopping list goes on. It also has a restaurant on the premises in case you can't wait to enjoy your purchase.

Tuesday-Saturday 10 am-9 pm, Sunday 10 am-3 pm.

### **Casa Munich**

Carrer Antic de Sant Joan 4, Barri Gotic  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-319-9608

<http://www.munichsports.com>

The colorful sneakers of that old Catalan brand have become fashionable all over the world, but only in a few shops will you find the very sought-after special editions, which are presented there like icons in front of walls striped in black and white. There are other locations in L'Illa at Avenida Diagonal and Maremagnum.

Monday-Saturday 11 am-9 pm.

### **Cereria Subira**

Baixada Llibreteria 7  
Barcelona, Spain

Specializing in candles of every imaginable color, shape and size, this old store (founded in 1761) still has its original decor and is quite a sight in itself.

Monday-Thursday 9:30 am-1:30 pm and 4-8 pm, Friday and Saturday 10 am-8 pm.

### **Colmado Quilez**

Rambla de Catalunya 63, Eixample  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-215-2356

<http://www.lafuente.es>

This is a wonderful grocery store that's jammed with cheeses, wine, meats and practically anything else you could want.

Monday-Friday 9 am-2 pm and 4:30-8:30 pm, Saturday 9 am-2 pm.

### **Custo**

Placa de les Olles 7  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-268-7893

<http://www.custo-barcelona.com>

The designer T-shirts and trendy clubwear are popular with the international club set. Spanish actress Penelope Cruz reportedly adores the label. There are multiple locations throughout Barcelona, including the flagship store, but the company's empire is growing all over the world.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-9 pm.

## Foix de Sarria

Mayor de Sarria 57, Sarria  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-203-0714

<http://foixdesarria.com>

This pastry shop, one of the most select in town, has a sort of hushed, reverential, almost museumlike air. It was founded in 1886 and belonged to the family of the famous Catalan poet J.V. Foix. Located in the main square of the Sarria neighborhood (not far from Museu Monestir de Pedralbes), it is famous for its *petxines de Sarria*—shell-shaped candies made of almond and bitter chocolate. Around Easter, they have a stunning chocolate sculpture display. Multiple locations—check website.

Daily 8 am-9 pm.

## Herboristeria del Rei

Vidre 1, Barri Gotic  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-318-0512

<http://www.herboristeriadelrei.com>

This stately shop specializing in herbal concoctions is as much a local landmark as it is a business. Once purveyors to royal houses, it now peddles herbal remedies, essential oils, natural cosmetics and candles.

Monday 4-8 pm, Tuesday-Saturday 10 am-8:30 pm.

## Jaime Beriostain

Carrer de Pau Claris 167  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-515-0779

<http://www.beriestain.com>

This lifestyle store from the titular fashionable interior designer retails in the stuff that makes his work so distinctive: retro furniture, freshly cut flowers, colorful pottery from France and Catalonia, striped table linens and scented candles. The shop includes a cafe that features it all, and is a chic place for lunch or afternoon tea.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-9 pm, Sunday 11:30 am-7:30 pm.

## La Manual Alpargatera

Avinyo 7  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-301-0172

<http://www.lamanualalpargatera.es>

A shoe shop specializing in the timelessly popular rope-soled espadrilles. Have a pair custom-made or choose from the shop's mind-blowing selection. Either way, be sure to see them being made by hand in the back room. The shop itself is also interesting—a haven of wrought-iron lamps and wooden beams unchanged since the 1940s.

Monday-Saturday 9:30 am-1:30 pm and 4:30-8 pm.

## La Patisserie

Aragon 228  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-451-8401

<http://www.lapastisseriabarcelona.com>

A must-visit for true pastry connoisseurs. Pastry chef of the world in 2011, Josep Maria Rodriguez Guerola has created some of the most delectable and creative pastries you will ever find. Enjoy them in the shop with a coffee or tea.

Open Monday-Saturday 9 am-2 pm and 5-8:30 pm, Sunday 9 am-2:30 pm.

## L'Arca de l'Avia

Banys nous 20, Barri Gotic  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-302-1598

<http://www.larca.es>

This high-quality vintage shop is a veritable "grandmother's chest," as the name denotes. Antique textiles, particularly those that might have found their way into a bride's trousseau, such as wedding dresses, veils, linens and curtains. Centuries-old laces are also proudly displayed.

Monday-Saturday 11 am-2 pm and 4:30-8:30 pm.

## OroLiquido

Carrer de la Palla 8  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-302-2980

<http://www.oroliquido.es>

This upscale boutique for Spanish olive oils has a great selection of Catalan offerings. The shop always has oils out to sample, from light to more intense flavors, and the staff is happy to help you choose an oil to suit your tastes.

Open daily 10:30 am-8:30 pm.

## Papabubble

Ample 28  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-268-8625

<http://www.papabubble.com>

Sweet teeth will definitely feel at home there. Hand-made candies and lollipops in all colors, shapes and sizes. The packaging can also be customized.

Monday-Friday 10 am-2 pm and 3-7 pm, Saturday 10 am-8 pm.

## Vila Viniteca

Carrer Agullers 7-9, El Born  
Barcelona, Spain



**Phone:** 90-232-7777

<http://www.vilaviniteca.es>

Great selection of 6,000 different Catalan and Spanish wines. Wonderful cavas, sherries, brandies and some very rare finds. Also sells international wines. Tastings offered.

Monday-Saturday 8:30 am-8:30 pm.

## Vinus Brindis

Plaza Sant Gregori Taumaturg 7  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-240-4230

<http://www.vinusbrindis.com>

This local wine shop specializes in Catalan wines and also offers free wine tastings during the week. Some employees speak English and will be able to guide you through the familiar and unfamiliar wines and grape varieties.

Monday 5-9 pm, Tuesday-Saturday 10:30 am-2:30 pm and 5-9 pm, Sunday 10:30 am-2:30 pm.

## Dining

### Dining Overview

Catalan cuisine resembles that of other Mediterranean countries and makes use of nuts, garlic, olive oil, tomatoes and herbs. Truly traditional Catalan restaurants often feature many rich sauces and protein-centric dishes. One of the simplest and yet most delicious dishes (the one Catalans particularly yearn for when abroad) is *pa amb tomaquet*: a large slice of fresh country bread (toasted or not) rubbed with tomato and drizzled with virgin olive oil. It may be topped with Iberian ham, cheese and anchovies or served along with meat, chicken or fish *a la brasa* (cooked over a charcoal fire).

Other local specialties include *esqueixada* (a salad of raw salt cod with onions and peppers), *espinacs a la catalana* (spinach sauteed with raisins and pine nuts) and *bacalla a la llauna* (salt cod with tomato, garlic and parsley). If you have a sweet tooth, *crema catalana* (a cinnamon- and citrus-flavored custard) is a must for dessert.

Many restaurants advertise as serving *cuina de mercat* or *cocina de mercado*, meaning they use whatever is in season at the local market: Freshness is of the essence. There are restaurants serving dishes from other regions of Spain, as well, and places specializing in the cuisine of other countries are also common.

Tapas, one of the first items people visiting Spain want to try, are traditionally from Andalusia, in the most southern part of Spain and are not local to Barcelona. However, you will find some amazing places to try tapas in Barcelona.

Paella is a traditional Valencian dish that you can find all over Barcelona. For a more authentic dish, go for the *fideua*, which is a local dish much like paella but made with pasta.

You can eat well anywhere in the city, although many of the most emblematic restaurants are clustered in the Barri Gotic and the Raval, with Barceloneta and the Olympic port being a must for seafood and the sheer pleasure of eating outdoors. Eixample and Sant Gervasi are often the places for the more modern

and new-style Catalan cuisine, and Gracia is full of restaurants, many of them very inexpensive and popular with students and younger visitors. Poble Sec is turning into a gastronomic theme park, thanks to the multiple restaurants owned by Ferran and Albert Adria of the famed three-Michelin-starred El Bulli. In fact, many restaurants that have opened in Barcelona over the past few years are headed by chefs that had cooked at El Bulli and created their own spaces after its closure in 2011.

Like most Europeans, the Catalans begin their day with a light breakfast that may include *bollos* (rolls), *melindros* (lady fingers) and pastries. Lunch is served about 1:30 pm at the very earliest, with peak time being 2-4 pm. *Berenar* or *merienda* is an afternoon snack taken at around 4 or 5 pm to get you through to a late dinner, which isn't served until 9 pm or later. The best bargains are available at lunch, when most restaurants offer the *menu del dia* or set lunch. Even the most basic (for little more than 10 euros) offer a choice of starter course, main course of meat or fish and dessert, plus a drink.

Expect to pay within these general guidelines for a dinner for one, not including drinks, tax or tip: \$ = less than 20 euros; \$\$ = 20 euros-40 euros; \$\$\$ = 41 euros-70 euros; \$\$\$\$ = more than 70 euros.

## Local & Regional

### ABaC

Ave. Tibidabo 1, Sant Gervasi  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-319-6600

<http://www.abacbarcelona.com>

A contemporary classic that is part of the Hotel ABaC, this restaurant occupies a spacious and stylish dining room. Its talented young chef Jordi Cruz has gained it two Michelin stars.

Tuesday-Saturday for lunch and dinner. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$ . Most major credit cards.

### Aqua

Passeig Maritim de la Barceloneta 30  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-225-1272

<http://www.grupotragaluz.com/restaurantes/agua>

Refined Spanish-Mediterranean cuisine served in a great location right on the beach. Beautiful people congregate on the terrace, but you can also enjoy the view through a large window from the cozy, tastefully designed interior.

Daily noon-11:30 pm. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$ . Most major credit cards.

### Butipa

Ramelleres 16  
Barcelona, Spain

<http://www.butipa.cat>

Local street-food vendor, specializing in the delicious local sausage called *butifarra* made in nearby Vic. Not only are these sausages delicious, they are also inexpensive and quick for those on the go. Some casual indoor seating is available, and there are vegetarian options. Enjoy a Moritz beer or local soda with your meal. Small space but worth a visit.

Daily 11 am-11 pm. \$. No credit cards.

### **Cafe de L'Academia**

Carrer Lledo 1, Barri Gotic  
Barcelona, Spain

Charming restaurant located on the Placa Sant Just, one of the most beautiful squares in Barcelona, in a Gothic building dating from the 15th century (not to mention the lovely terrace in summer). The Catalan food, using only the freshest ingredients, is excellent and surprisingly affordable: It's one of the best bets in Barcelona for lunch, which can cost as little as 15 euros. Try the eggplant terrine with goat cheese followed by codfish au gratin.

Monday-Friday 1-3:30 pm and 8-11 pm. Reservations highly recommended. \$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

### **Cal Pep**

Carrer Placa De las Ollas 8, La Ribera  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-310-7961

<http://www.calpep.com>

One of the best culinary shows in town. Seafood tapas and fresh seasonal fish dishes are prepared in an open kitchen in full view of diners. The cavelike interior enhances the theatrical atmosphere. A line begins to form outside the door before the place even opens, so be sure to get there early.

Monday 7:30-11:30 pm, Tuesday-Saturday 1-11:30 pm. \$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

### **Casa Calvet**

Carrer de Casp 48, Eixample  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-412-4012

<http://www.casacalvet.es>

Dine on excellent Mediterranean food with Asian touches, served in a former office building designed by Antoni Gaudi. Try the duck liver with oranges, and rosemary ice cream for dessert. Wonderful game dishes in the fall.

Monday-Saturday 1-3:30 pm and 8:30 pm-11 pm. Reservations required. \$\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

### **El Gran Cafe**

Carrer d' Avinyo 9  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-318-7986

<http://cacheirorestaurants.com/gran-cafe>

One of the oldest restaurants in Barcelona. It features old-fashioned decor and traditional Catalan dishes, but also boasts a selection of more innovative dishes. With its warm, welcoming atmosphere and round tables, it's a great place for a night out with friends or family.

Daily for lunch and dinner. \$-\$\$\$.

## El Nacional

Passeig de Gracia 24-bis, Eixample  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-518-5053

<http://www.elnacionalbcn.com>

This spectacular space, converted from an old garage by local designer Lazaro Rosa-Violan, is actually four restaurants and bars in one, each with a different gastronomic style and identity. You can choose from tapas, fresh salads and deli dishes, to grilled fish and raw oysters. Even if you only opt for a glass of cava and a few olives at the central bar, it's worth going for the decor and setting alone.

Daily noon-2 am. Reservations recommended.

## Els Quatre Gats

Montsio 3, Barri Gotic  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-302-4140

<http://www.4gats.com>

Founded in 1897, The Four Cats is one of Barcelona's most famous historic restaurants. It maintains the traditional look designed by modernist architect Puig i Cadafalch that attracted such famous personalities as Pablo Picasso and Antoni Gaudi in their day. Indeed, Picasso hung many of his earliest paintings on the restaurant's walls and designed the first menu. We recommend the 18-euro menu for lunch (Monday-Friday), which includes a choice of two courses and dessert. Despite the tourist crowd, the atmosphere is still interesting, although the food is rather average.

Daily 8 am-1 am. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

## Embat

Mallorca 304, Eixample  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-458-0855

<http://www.restaurantembat.com>

This small, chef-owned Catalan restaurant operates on a desire to continue serving great food, but at affordable prices. Expect a simple interior, friendly service and fresh ingredients.

Tuesday-Saturday 1-3:45 pm, Thursday-Saturday 8:30-11 pm as well. Reservations recommended. \$\$.

## Freixa Tradicio

Sant Elies 22  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-209-7559

<http://www.freixatradicio.com/en>

Classic Catalan cuisine is served in this upscale, family-owned restaurant. Since the 1980s, chef Freixa has been making some of the finest local dishes in the Sant Gervasi district of Barcelona. Great service and attention to detail will greet you when you arrive to taste dishes such as the Catalan cannelloni or Crema Catalana. The menu is divided by region in Catalonia, which gives you an even better idea of the cultural differences within the region.

Tuesday-Saturday 1-3:30 pm and 9-11:30 pm, Sunday 1-3:30 pm. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$.  
Most major credit cards.

### Gresca

Calle Provenca 230, Eixample  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-451-6193

<http://www.gresca.net>

Not to be missed, as this small, family-owned place could be the best value for the money if you are interested in an excellent three-course lunch for less than 20 euros. Chef Raphael Pena creates unique takes using the freshest local products and some very modern cooking techniques.

Monday-Friday 1:30-3:30 pm and 8:30-10:30 pm, Saturday 8:30-10:30 pm. Reservations recommended. \$\$.  
Most major credit cards.

### Hisop

Passatge Marimon 9, Sant Gervasi  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-241-3233

<http://www.hisop.com>

One of the great chefs of Barcelona, Oriol Ivern creates unique and memorable plates with touches of molecular gastronomy and local, seasonal produce. It's perhaps more avant-garde than other restaurants of similar pricing—don't let the simple dining room deceive you. A wine-tasting menu is offered to pair with the tasting menu, but unless you are a strong drinker, you might find it to be too much.

Monday-Friday 1:30-11 pm, Saturday 8:30-11 pm. Reservations required. \$\$\$\$.  
Most major credit cards.

### Jaume de Provenca

Provenca 88, Eixample  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-430-0029

<http://www.jaumeprovenza.com>

Chef Jaume Bargues enjoys well-earned prestige for the wonderfully original variations on the traditional Catalan cuisine he has dreamed up.

Tuesday-Saturday 1:15-3:45 pm and 9-11:45 pm, Sunday 1-3:45 pm. Reservations required. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$.  
Most major credit cards.

### La Camarga

Aribau 117, Eixample  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-323-6655

<http://lacamarga.com/en>

This restaurant features imaginative and delicious Mediterranean cooking based particularly on fresh vegetables and fish, in addition to some excellent rice dishes.

Daily for lunch and dinner. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$. MasterCard or Visa preferred.

## L'Antic Forn

Villarroel 182, Eixample  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-430-0826

<http://www.lanticfornvillarroel.com>

A traditional and cozy Catalan restaurant that focuses on market-fresh and seasonal ingredients and grilled meats. Set menus for lunch (12 euros) and dinner (26.50 euros). Definitely try the *calcots* (a type of scallion served with a sauce) when it's in season.

Daily 1-5 pm and 8 pm-midnight. \$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

## Mam i Teca

Lluna 4, El Raval  
Barcelona, Spain

If you're looking for a light meal or just prefer to nibble the night away in a languorous setting, look no further than this cozy tapas bar, with a handful of tables and soft jazz music. Traditional tapas are treated with loving care by the resident foodies who source top-quality Spanish ingredients such as air-cured tuna, fresh anchovies and a variety of cheeses to create Catalan specialties. But the daily specials are inspired.

Daily 1-4 pm and 8 pm-midnight (closed for lunch Tuesday and Saturday). \$\$\$.

## Restaurant Gaig

Corsega 200 (at the corner of Aribau), Eixample  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-429-1017

<http://www.restaurantgaig.com>

Multiple generations of the Gaig family have nurtured this business for more than a century, and a distinct spirit of innovation and sound service on the part of the current husband-and-wife team keeps it going. Refined Catalan dishes are served in a sophisticated contemporary setting.

Tuesday-Saturday 1:30-3:30 pm and 8:30-11 pm, Sunday 1:30-3:30 pm. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

## Semproniana

Rossello 148, Eixample  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-453-1820

<http://www.semproniana.net>

Located in a former printing office, this restaurant affords a welcome break from style and design with its nonmatching furniture, ceramic plates and other flea-market finds. But the food is some of the most inventive and delicious you will find in the city for such reasonable prices; servings come in various sizes. Favorites include codfish moussaka, partridges with cinnamon sauce, and *civet* of hare with jam. The star of the dessert menu is the *delirium tremens*, an understandably small slice of pure chocolate bliss.

Monday-Friday 1:30-4 pm and 9-11 pm, Saturday 9-11 pm. Reservations required. \$\$\$. MasterCard and Visa only.

## Taktika Berri

Carrer de Valencia 169, Eixample  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-453-4759

<http://www.taktika-berri.vipgourmet.com>

This is one of the best and most popular tapas bars in Barcelona, so reservations are highly recommended. Since the food is Basque, tapas there are called *pintxos* and are just delicious. Full meals are excellent, too, with an emphasis on fresh seafood. Do not expect a menu—the waiter will tell you what's available. The light, fruity Basque wines go very well with the food.

Monday-Friday 1:30-4 pm and 8:30-11 pm, Saturday 1:30-4 pm. Reservations recommended. \$-\$\$\$.  
Most major credit cards.

## Tragaluz

Passaje de la Concepcio 5, Eixample  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-487-0621

<http://www.grupotragaluz.com/restaurantes/tragaluz>

Two restaurants in one: Japanese food on the first floor and Mediterranean cuisine on the second floor, where fresh ingredients are served in endlessly imaginative combinations such as pork with figs or steamed hake with applesauce. This restaurant has won design awards as well, and is one of Barcelona's most fashionable eating places (don't miss the restrooms by Olympic-design darling Mariscal).

Daily 1:30-4 pm and 8-11:30 pm (cocktail bar open daily 6 pm-2 am). Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$.  
Most major credit cards.

## Cuisines

### Fusion

## Elsa y Fred Gastrobar

Rec Comtal 11  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-501-6611

<http://www.elsayfred.es>

This friendly, cozy little place serves classic tapas with an international twist. Dishes are creatively presented and delicious. Its name is derived from the Spanish/Argentinian film of the same name.

Daily 8:30 pm-1:30 am. Reservations available. Most major credit cards.

## Pakta

Calle Lleida 5  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-624-0177

<http://en.pakta.es>

If you have never tried Nikkei cuisine (a blend of Peruvian and Japanese), this is the place to do it. This is one of the many restaurants owned and operated by the Adria brothers in Poble Sec, and the talented chefs from all over South America and Europe have created some of the most delicate and delicious dishes available. The menu is seafood-centric with unique combinations of sweet and savory. There is also a nice, well-priced local wine menu and Japanese whiskey selection to choose from.

Monday-Saturday 7-10 pm, Saturday 1-3 pm. Reservations required. \$\$\$\$ . Most major credit cards.

## Italian

### La Burrata

Balmes 283 (Metro: Fontana), Sant Gervasi  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-500-8525

<http://www.laburrata.com>

Amazing pizza is found in this Neapolitan-owned and -run restaurant in the Sant Gervasi neighborhood. In the morning, the dough can be seen rising in the window, to be cooked in the wood-fired oven at night. Other lovely dishes such as gnocchi with *burrata* are available. Casual and good for families.

Monday-Saturday 1-4 pm and 8 pm-midnight. \$\$.

### Murivecchi

Princesa 59, El Born  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-315-2297

<http://www.restaurante-murivecchi.com>

Exquisite Neapolitan cuisine. The individual pizzas are big enough to share, and the homemade desserts are fabulous. The lunch menu is particularly good and worth considering if you are visiting the Museo Picasso (about a five-minute walk) around midday.

Daily 1-4 pm and 8 pm-midnight. Reservations recommended for dinner. \$\$\$ . Most major credit cards.

## Spanish

### 10's

Rec 79, El Born  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-319-2222

<http://tensbarcelona.com>

This small and casual restaurant in the Park Hotel specializes in generous portions of creative tapas by chef Jordi Cruz.

Daily 1:30-3:30 pm and 8-11:30 pm. \$\$ . Most major credit cards.



## Amaya

La Rambla 20  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-302-1037

<http://www.restauranteamaya.com>

This big restaurant is one of the best options on La Rambla and serves dishes from the Basque region of Spain. Lots of seafood on the menu, including unusual items such as eel. Tables are set up outside April-October. It can get very crowded, especially on Sunday.

Daily 1-4 pm and 7-11 pm. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$ . Most major credit cards.

## Bilbao

Perill 33, Gracia  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-458-9624

<http://www.restaurantbilbao.com>

You couldn't find a better place to eat the authentic Mediterranean diet. This well-loved local favorite on one of Gracia's most narrow streets serves whatever's in season, fresh and simply cooked in the traditional style: artichokes sauteed with ham, wild mushrooms with garlic and parsley, meat or fish *a la plantxa*. Homemade desserts and a good wine list. Though not inexpensive, the quality makes it an unbeatable value. The *menu del dia* is an especially good bargain.

Monday-Friday 1-11 pm, Saturday 2-11 pm. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$.

## Carlitos

Calvet 50, Sant Gervasi  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-125-4636

<http://www.restaurantcarlitos.com>

Known for some of the best *croquettas* (fried bechamel with a variety of fillings) in Barcelona, this is a great place to try some amazing tapas.

Tuesday and Wednesday 9 am-midnight, Thursday-Saturday 9 am-3 am. Reservations recommended. \$\$.

## Els Sortidors del Parlament

Parliament 53, Eixample  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-441-1602

<http://www.elssortidors.com>

Beautifully designed with classic colors and a respect to the historical architecture of this old motorcycle repair shop, this is possibly the most spacious tapas bar in Barcelona. Delicious traditional dishes and a house vermouth. The blood-sausage gratin is divine.

Monday-Thursday 5 pm-midnight, Friday-Sunday noon-midnight. Reservations not accepted. \$-\$\$ . Most major credit cards.

## Panxa del Bisbe

Rabassa 37, Gracia  
Barcelona, Spain

Although a bit outside the normal tourist area, this is a great space for small groups and it has wonderful plates to share. Local wines.

Monday-Saturday 1:30-3:30 pm and 8:30 pm-midnight. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

## Quimet&Quimet

Poeta Cabanyes 25  
Barcelona, Spain

The Quim family has run this iconic tapas bar since 1914. It has a more traditional atmosphere, and with standing room only, encourages you to drink. There are excellent beers, but the highlight is the Spanish and international wines that grace all the walls of the small space. Enjoy some cured seafood and *pintxos* while taking in the environment. Cash preferable.

Monday-Friday noon-4 pm and 7-10:30 pm, Saturday noon-4 pm. Reservations not accepted. \$-\$\$.

## Rincon de Aragon

Carme 28 (near the La Boqueria market), Raval  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-302-6789

<http://elrinconbarcelona.com>

With all the seafood places in town, you may get a craving for some good meat, and this is the place to get it. Both the cooking and the decor suggest the simplicity of the mountain regions near the Aragonese town of Teruel, known throughout Spain for its delicious rustic cuisine. Simple dishes, such as the roast lamb, are cooked perfectly. Expect the best beef, pork and lamb in Barcelona.

Daily 1-11:30 pm. Reservations recommended. \$-\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

## Taktika Berri

Carrer de Valencia 169, Eixample  
Barcelona, Spain

This is one of the best and most popular tapas bars in Barcelona, so reservations are highly recommended. Since the food is Basque, tapas there are called *pintxos* and are delicious. Full meals are excellent, too, with an emphasis on fresh seafood. Do not expect a menu—the waiter will tell you what's available. The light, fruity Basque wines go well with the food. Reservations recommended.

Monday-Saturday 1:30-4 pm and 8:30-11 pm. \$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

## Tickets Bar

Ave. Parallel 164, Eixample  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 606-225-545

<http://www.ticketsbar.es>

This is *the* tapas place in Barcelona. One of the Adria brothers' creations, it is more like entering a carnival than a restaurant. If you want a spot, reservations are required and you will need to book online three months in advance. While you can expect some molecular-style tapas, it also has more traditional tapas in creative plates. If you don't know what to order, your waiter will be happy to make suggestions based on your taste preferences.

Tuesday-Friday 6:30-10:30 pm, Saturday 1-3 pm and 7-10:30 pm. Reservations required. \$\$\$\$.

## Vegetarian

### La Bascula

Flassaders 30, Barri Gotic  
Barcelona, Spain

Run as a cooperative, this cafe does not impress at first glance. However, hidden in the back is a wonderful, intimate dining area, sporting mismatched furniture and regularly filled by a young and vibrant clientele. The service is friendly, and the quality of the food is very good. Highly recommended for light lunches or afternoon teas.

Friday-Saturday 1-11 pm, Sunday 1-7 pm. Reservations not accepted. \$. No credit cards.

## Seafood

### Els Pescadors

Placa Prim 1, Poble Nou  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-225-2018

<http://www.elspescadors.com>

This is one of the best places in town to eat fresh fish. The old-style tavern decor, relaxed atmosphere and high-quality wine list enhance the experience. During summer months, we recommend sitting on the terrace, an oasis of calm in the bustling city.

Daily 1-4 pm and 8-11 pm. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

### Escriba Xiringuito

Ronda Litoral 42, Vila Olimpica  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-221-0729

<http://www.xiringuitoescriba.com>

This restaurant looks right out over the beach, and staff will drag tables into the sun for you. There's lots of room inside, but the outdoor tables are what's prized: Locals mill on the seafront, aperitif in hand, while waiting for one to open up. It has delicious fish dishes. For an appetizer, don't miss the *pica-pica*, a selection of tapas including crispy fried-vegetable tidbits, sardines and croquettes. Be sure to have dessert; the place belongs to a famous family of chocolatiers who also operate an excellent pastry shop on La Rambla (if you go there, have the hot chocolate).

Daily 1-4:30 pm and 8-11 pm. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$. Visa and MasterCard only.

## Suquet de l'Almirall

Passeig Joan de Borbo 65, Port Vell  
Barcelona, Spain

**Phone:** 93-221-6233

<http://www.suquetdelalmirall.com>

One of the most interesting seafood restaurants in town, it beautifully blends tradition and innovation. Enjoy perfectly prepared paella and a host of other rice and fish dishes, or try a selection of half portions of the chef's suggestions. The restaurant has a sunny terrace and enjoys the tangy sea air of Barceloneta. Extensive wine cellar.

Tuesday-Saturday 1-4 pm and 8-11 pm, Sunday 1-4 pm. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$. MasterCard and Visa only.

## Security

### Etiquette

Business travelers will find a moderately affluent city (in spite of current economic challenges), in step with the age of high technology but still maintaining many of its traditions.

**Appointments**—You may find it valuable to have a local intermediary who can assist in establishing business appointments. Schedule meetings well in advance. As a visitor, you should be punctual but allow a 15-minute grace period for anyone you are meeting. Catalonians pride themselves on their efficiency and timeliness.

**Personal Introductions**—Handshakes are the typical greeting. Last names with the appropriate Spanish title are used. If your acquaintance has a professional title, you will learn it when introduced; if not, *senor* (male) and *senora* (married female) are appropriate. The title and the person's last name should be used until you are instructed otherwise. Note that it is typical for Spanish people to have two surnames, one from their father and one from their mother. The father's surname will be given first during the introduction, and that's the name that is used to address or speak of the person. Thus, Federico Garcia Lorca would be addressed as "Senor Garcia." Invest in business cards with the information printed in English on one side and Spanish on the other.

**Negotiating**—Business is typically preceded by small talk and pleasantries. Negotiations can be a more extended process than in northern European countries. Companies tend to be hierarchical, so focus on individuals of equal rank or higher. You are an outsider and must ingratiate yourself. Thus, expect many questions about your business, background and family. Intuition, as much as objective fact, is important in their impression of you, so remain warm and friendly in your demeanor. Anticipate that many of the people important to a decision may not be present at any given meeting.

**Business Entertaining**—Lunch and dinner are the meals most commonly attended by business associates. Lunch is usually the more productive for deal-making, but business discussions should be saved for the very end of the meal, during coffee. Know that dinner is usually served quite late—9 or 10 pm. Spaniards often fill the gap between lunch and dinner by snacking on tapas at cafes and taverns.

**Body Language**—Conversations take place at close quarters, and polite conversational touching may be practiced.

**Gift Giving**—In business contexts, gifts are typically given at the conclusion of successful negotiations. Gifts should be opened and appreciated immediately. Appropriate personal gifts when visiting a home include flowers, wine or chocolate, but avoid lilies, as they are associated with funerals.

**Conversation**—If you don't speak Spanish or Catalan, try to learn at least a few phrases well. In Barcelona, Catalan is spoken on an equal footing with Spanish, and the locals are generally impressed when foreigners take the time to learn the language. Food, sports and travel are good topics, but if you bring up FC Barcelona and soccer in general be prepared for in-depth, detailed conversation.

Be aware that, in many regards, Spain is still a country of regions: Many people will identify more strongly with their local area than with the country as a whole. Catalonians consider themselves members of an autonomous nation, even though many people in the rest of Spain oppose this view—tread lightly with the topic.

## Personal Safety

In general, Barcelona is a reasonably safe city to walk around in, even late at night. The biggest danger is petty crime—pickpocketing, bag snatching and assorted scams. Thieves tend to ply their trade in the busy tourist spots such as La Rambla, the Barri Gotic, El Raval, in clubs or bars, down by the port, on the metro and on buses.

A few precautions will help keep you out of trouble: Don't carry money, credit cards or documents in back pockets, breast pockets or backpacks. Leave valuables in a safe-deposit box at your hotel, including your passport (a photocopy of your passport is sufficient to carry with you). Wear purses, bags and cameras slung around your neck or across your chest and keep them close to your body in crowds. Don't set them down at your feet or in adjacent seats in outdoor cafes or on trains and buses—keep your hand on them at all times. Do not leave cell phones or valuables on restaurant tables, especially on terraces.. Never leave any item of value unattended or inside a parked car.

In an emergency, dial 112.

For more information, contact your country's travel-advisory agency.

## Health

Barcelona's tap water is safe to drink; however, many people prefer bottled water, which is easily available and inexpensive. Sanitation levels are high, but it's wise to exercise caution with tapas that look old and tired. It's also sensible to avoid mayonnaise when the weather's hot.

Spanish law prohibits smoking in all enclosed (and some open) public areas. With its regulations coming into line with most of the rest of Europe, smoking is banned totally in cafes and restaurants, and only allowed in certain specified areas of hotels. Smoking outdoors is banned in children's play areas, around schools and near hospitals. However, smoking at outdoor cafes is quite common, so avoid those areas if you are sensitive to cigarette smoke.

If you travel into the countryside, protect yourself from ticks, which are quite prevalent and can carry disease. There are also poisonous caterpillars that are found between January and April, typically near pine trees. Do not handle them; the hairs have a toxin that is rather painful.

The beaches of Barcelona are safe and typically do not have any waves or currents, but recently there have been an increasing number of shark sightings, so pay attention to the flags and lifeguards. Jellyfish can also be numerous in the warmer months of July and August. Be sure to wear plenty of sunscreen at the beach, or when walking around.

Most doctors have some knowledge of English, and many speak it reasonably well. Hotels will likely arrange to find an English-speaking doctor for you. In an emergency, your best bet is to go to the emergency department of any of the big public hospitals, all of which are open 24 hours a day. Be sure to have your health insurance information available and contact your home health insurance agency as soon as possible to advise them of the situation. While Barcelona is known for a high-quality, inexpensive public health system, you will pay much higher prices unless you are a resident.

Two hospitals in or near the city center are Centre Perecamps, Drassanes 13-15, Raval (phone 93-441-0600), and Hospital Clinic i Provincial, Villarroel 170, Eixample. Phone 93-227-5400. Pediatric emergencies are best handled at Hospital Sant Joan de Deu, Passeig de Sant Joan de Deu 2, Les Corts. Phone 93-600-9783.

If you need a prescription filled on short notice, be aware that every neighborhood has at least one pharmacy open 24 hours a day. Their addresses will be posted in the windows of other pharmacies and will be published in the newspaper under *Farmacias de Guardia*.

For an ambulance, dial 061 or 93-300-2020.

For more information, contact your country's health-advisory agency.

## Disabled Advisory

Barcelona is quite attentive to making the city accessible to locals and visitors alike. Sidewalks are wide and well-maintained, and ramps or elevators have been installed wherever possible. Unfortunately, the Gothic Quarter, Born and Raval have historic buildings that cannot be fitted as easily as the more modern areas. Luckily, only 16 of all 156 metro stations can *not* accommodate the disabled—the overwhelming majority of stations are accessible. All buses have automatic extending ramps, making them completely accessible. The public transit agency offers a list of all buses and metro stops that are equipped for the disabled at <http://www.tmb.cat/en/transport-accessible>.

You can also request a taxi equipped for wheelchairs. Phone 93-420-8088. <http://www.taxi-amic-adaptat.com>.

Contact Oficina d'Informacio Turistica for additional information about hotels, transportation and services for those with disabilities. Phone 93-285-3834.

Other good sources of advice and information include Accessible Barcelona (<http://www.accessiblebarcelona.com>, a website created by an Englishman, Craig Grimes, who lives in Barcelona and uses a wheelchair (<http://www.craiggrimes.com>), and the Municipal Institute for People with Disabilities, Valencia 344, Eixample. Phone 93-413-2775. <http://w110.bcn.cat/portal/site/BarcelonaAccessible>.

## Facts

### Dos & Don'ts

Do be careful where you light up. Spain's antismoking law took effect in 2011. The law bans smoking in enclosed public spaces, which include bars, restaurants, hotel lobbies, casinos, clubs, office buildings, open-decked tourist buses and airports. There is also a ban on smoking in outdoor spaces around schools, hospitals and children's playgrounds.

Do keep your eyes open for pickpockets. The areas around La Rambla and La Sagrada Familia are particularly dicey. In addition to light-fingered pickpockets, there are also a number of tricks thieves use to distract and defraud you. To reach into your front pockets, someone may approach you with a magazine or clipboard and practically press it into your chest, talking excitedly all the time. This is just a cover for them entering your pockets and removing your valuables. Leave your valuables in the hotel safe and take only as much cash as you'll need.

Don't confuse Catalan with Spanish or refer to Catalan as a dialect. They are distinct languages representing different cultures.

Don't expect to eat lunch before 1 pm, or dinner before 8 pm at most restaurants. The Catalans eat later than most visitors, so use the time before to try out some tapas like the locals do.

Do dress modestly in the city. Spain is a conservative country, so skimpy tops and too-brief clothing are inappropriate for visits to churches. Catalonians normally dress well and stylishly, but the younger generations are embracing a more relaxed attire. Even then, shorts are tailored and often worn with button-up or polo shirts instead of T-shirts. Bathing suits are only for the beach and will mark you for a tourist if worn elsewhere in the city, as will flip-flops.

Don't litter. You may see some people throwing trash in the street, but most people are tidy and have great respect for public areas.

Don't preface a question or restaurant order with too many polite formalities. Catalans are a friendly people, but when it comes to these situations, they prefer you get straight to the point. A simple *gracias* or *merci* will suffice at the end.

## Geostats

**Passport/Visa Requirements:** Passports are needed by citizens of Australia, the U.S. and Canada and must be valid for at least six months after your trip. A tourist visa is not required for a visit of three months or less. Proof of onward passage and sufficient funds are needed by all. Reconfirm travel document requirements with your carrier before departure.

**Population:** 1,600,000.

**Languages:** Catalan, Spanish.

**Predominant Religions:** Christian (Roman Catholic).

**Time Zone:** 1 hour ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (+1 GMT). Daylight Saving Time is observed from the end of March to the end of October.

**Voltage Requirements:** 220 volts. 50 Hz.

**Telephone Codes:** 34, country code; 93, city code;

## Money

### Taxes

The value-added tax in Spain is called by its abbreviation IVA (pronounced *ee-bah*). The basic rate is a whopping 21%. There is a reduced rate of 10% which applies to such things as passenger transport, hotels and restaurants. The lowest rate of 4% applies to such items as basic food and drink (not purchased at a restaurant) and pharmaceuticals.

Visitors to Spain not residing in the European Union are eligible for a reimbursement of the tax that they pay on some merchandise. The procedure can be a bit complicated, but it's basically as follows: The tax refund is valid only for purchases of 90.15 euros (taxes included) or higher. Look for stores displaying a "tax-free" sticker and request an invoice and an IVA refund form detailing the value, tax rate and nature of the purchase. When departing Spain, you will need to have the completed form stamped by customs—do this before you check your luggage, because they may need to see the purchased items. This is important even if you will be returning home from another EU country. If you are departing the EU from another member country, final processing of your refund claim will be handled by that country's customs. You can mail in the stamped form up to three months from the date of purchase and wait to receive your refund in the form of a check in euros, or you can get an immediate cash refund (minus a service charge) at the Tax-Free Shopping refund window, which is usually located in the departure area of airports.

### Tipping

Tipping in Spain is not based on a set formula. Wait staff will be delighted if you leave something as a way of saying you were pleased with the service. In higher-end restaurants, it is common to leave at least 5%-10%. The norm in bars or cafes would be to leave small change or round up the bill. Taxi drivers do not expect a tip.

If you are staying in a hotel that offers room service or other hotel staff services, be sure to leave a few euros for each request.

### Weather

There is really no best time to visit Barcelona, nor a worst. Thanks to its location on the Mediterranean, it enjoys a mild, pleasant climate year-round. December-February is the chilliest period, although the sun shines most of the time. Even in winter, locals sunbathe on the beaches (in "suntraps" by the seawall) and eat and drink on terraces. The hardier ones even occasionally take a dip; you may not want to follow their example, however, as the water is surprisingly cold.

In January, the average temperature rarely falls below 50 F/10 C and is often considerably higher. Really cold spells are typically few and far between, although recent years have seen an increasing number of cold spells and even some snow.

Summers aren't necessarily hot—the average high in July and August is 78 F/25 C—but the high humidity can make them somewhat uncomfortable. School vacation runs late June to mid-September, and those who are able to do so spend the entire summer away from the city. Most shops and businesses take their annual vacations in August, leaving the city relatively empty.



Rain is infrequent, but can be heavy when it occurs, and thunderstorms can be violent.

## What to Wear

It won't take you long to learn that Barcelona is a style-conscious city, so it's a good idea to have some options other than jeans and T-shirts. For the heat of summer, take along the coolest clothes possible. Fashionable trousers and sleeveless tops are fine, but bathing gear is strictly for the beach. Sunscreen and a hat will be useful accessories.

In autumn and spring, it can be chilly in the morning and evening, so take along a jacket and sweater. The winter tends to be relatively mild, but it is wise to take along hats, gloves, scarves and so forth, and to be prepared for very cold spells, which can appear without much warning.

Business visitors should stick to plain, conservative business suits with ties for the men and the equivalent for women: dark colors in winter, lighter in summer. Above all, pack comfortable walking shoes. Loafers are typical footwear for men in the city.

## Transportation

The best way to get around in Barcelona is on foot (a centrally located hotel will put you within walking distance of many of the best attractions) and by public transport, especially the efficient subway system, the metro. There are a number of multiride tickets and travel passes available for use on the nine metro lines, the city railway network and a huge fleet of buses.

The city's old tram network has also been resurrected, renovated and streamlined; modern, speedy, and almost-noiseless trams now regularly coast up and down Avenida Diagonal and northeast along the coast to the former industrial suburb of Sant Marti. Another alternative for getting around the city center are the ecological taxis that resemble a cross between rickshaws and bicycles, though they're not the best choice if you happen to be in a hurry or want to go farther afield.

The hugely popular Bus Turistic is a great way to visit the main sights of Barcelona. For general information on all city transportation services, visit [http://www.tmb.cat/en\\_US/home.jsp](http://www.tmb.cat/en_US/home.jsp).