



## 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.

**Especially for Kids**—Zoo de Barcelona; a ride on the roller coaster at Parc d'Atraccions del Tibidabo; the ComsoCaixa science museum.



## 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 Pobleu 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 Domenech 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 Esglesia Catedral Basilica 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 Eulalia, 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 Cerdana, 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 Comerç 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 accross 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.mmmcat.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 Gaudí), 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>

Gaudí'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: Gaudí'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 Gaudí 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.



## 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 Beriestain

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.





## 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 Andalucia, 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.jaumeprovenca.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).



## Valencia, Spain

### Overview

#### Introduction

Valencia, Spain, located 190 mi/300 km east of Madrid, is famous for food and revelry. It's the home of paella and two festivals: Las Fallas, a weeklong fiesta in March that climaxes with the burning of hundreds of enormous papier-mache *ninots* (huge effigies), and La Tomatina, a festival in August that takes place in the nearby town of Bunol and revolves around revelers throwing tomatoes at one another.



#### Port Information

##### Location

Most cruise ships dock at the cruise ship terminal 2.5 mi/4 km away from the city center. Larger ships, especially when the port is busy, dock slightly farther away but passengers are shuttled to the main terminal. There is a visitors information center in the terminal.

Many cruise lines offer shuttles from the port to the Plaza del Ayuntamiento, which is central to many of the city's attractions. It is also possible to take a taxi or a bus from the terminal—the No. 4 bus takes passengers to Plaza del Ayuntamiento. (The journey takes 35-40 minutes by bus and 15 minutes in a taxi.) Bus No. 19 connects the port to the City of Arts and Science.

### See & Do

#### Sightseeing

Valencia has a lot to offer as an ancient trade hub and modern city of the arts and sciences. With an abundance of beautiful cityscape, museums and historical sites, there is plenty to keep you busy. For a striking contrast in architecture, visit Valencia's historic old quarter, where stunning Gothic structures will impress in an entirely different way.

#### Historic Sites

##### La Lonja de la Seda

Plaza del Mercado s/n  
Valencia, Spain 46001

**Phone:** 96-352-5478

[http://www.spain.info/en/conoce/monumentos/valencia/lonja\\_de\\_la\\_seda.html](http://www.spain.info/en/conoce/monumentos/valencia/lonja_de_la_seda.html)

Opposite the central market, the old silk exchange, La Lonja de la Seda, is a Gothic masterpiece of sculpted spiral columns supporting a vaulted ceiling. It was made a UNESCO World Heritage site



because of its beautiful architecture and cultural importance as a Mediterranean trade hub. On Sunday there is a traveling stamp and coin exhibit that breezes through.

### **Saint Mary of Valencia Cathedral**

Calle de La Barchilla 1  
Valencia, Spain 46003

**Phone:** 96-391-8127

<http://www.catedraldevalencia.es>

By European cathedral standards, Saint Mary of Valencia is fairly modest, built in a hurry between the 13th and 15th centuries by the local well-to-do so they might distinguish the territory as Christian. Despite its less flashy facade, the cathedral is well worth a visit. The nave's simplicity and lack of ornamentation only makes it all the more stunning, and the crucifix-shaped windows are best seen in morning light.

### **Museums**

#### **Ciudad de Las Artes y Las Ciencias**

Avenida del Profesor Lopez Pinero s/n  
Valencia, Spain 40613

**Phone:** 902-100-031

<http://www.cac.es>

As Spain's third-largest city, Valencia's ambition is apparent in this museum—a striking assemblage of science museum, planetarium, aquarium and performing arts center, most of which was designed by local architect Santiago Calatrava. The City of Arts and Sciences is great for children and adults, but be sure to give yourself a day to fully explore and enjoy the complex—it's massive.

Monday-Friday 9 am-6 pm, Saturday and Sunday 10 am-2 pm.

#### **Instituto Valenciano de Arte Moderno**

Calle de Guillem de Castro 118  
Valencia, Spain 46003

**Phone:** 96-386-3000

<http://www.ivam.es/en>

In this ancient city, the Instituto Valenciano de Arte Moderno marries the historic with the modern in its very design, split between a contemporary building and a 13th century convent. Its galleries hold the works of Julio Gonzalez (heavily influenced by Picasso), Ignacio Pinazo and numerous other artists in rotating exhibits. Take your time exploring the museum, soaking in both the art and architecture.

Tuesday-Sunday 10 am-7 pm.

#### **National Museum of Ceramics**

Calle Poeta Querol 2  
Valencia, Spain 46002

**Phone:** 96-351-6392

<http://mnceramica.mcu.es>



The National Museum of Ceramics is housed in the incredible Palacio del Marques de Dos Aguas, so named for its alabaster sculpture depicting two rivers. Fronted with an ornate baroque facade, the museum's architecture is as noteworthy as its contents. The ceramics range from prehistoric to Roman and Arab items, with a few of Picasso's works in the mix.

## Zoos & Wildlife

### Bioparc Valencia

Ave. Pio Baroja 3  
Valencia, Spain 46015

**Phone:** 96-225-0340

<http://www.bioparcvalencia.es>

For nature lovers, the 25-acre/10-hectare zoo is worth a visit. It is home to 4,000 exotic animals from 250 species, including antelope, zebras, gorillas and leopards. The zoo reproduces the vegetation, terrain and sounds of the animals' ecosystem while concealing barriers and man-made structures, making your visit seem more like a safari.

Daily from 10 am. Closing times vary with seasons.

## Shopping

Valencia offers unique handcrafted items: contemporary and antique paintings and sculpture, knotted rugs, guitars, ornate handmade shawls, decorative pottery, handmade furniture, and ornamental combs and fans.

The nearby town of Manises produces some of the most famous decorative *azulejos* (tiles) in the country.

Also popular are the unique shopping areas that offer specialty Spanish goods. Many shops also double as art and antique galleries, worth visiting for their displays of historical pieces and other collectibles.

## Dining

### Dining Overview

We think the food is reason enough for a trip to Valencia. Paella, the city's signature dish, is ubiquitous, of course. Other dishes to try include *sopa de pescado* (fish soup), *parrillada* (a mixture of various fried fish and shellfish) and grilled lamb and rabbit. *Cocido* (pronounced co-THEE-do) is a traditional Madrilenian dish made from sausage, bacon, garbanzo beans, cabbage and boiled meat—it's especially popular in winter.

Desserts include flan (baked egg custard), *turrón* (marzipan, chocolate or nougat), *crema Catalana* (egg custard with a crunchy glazed top), *tarta de Santiago* (a cake made with almonds) and *pijamas* (a silky combination of peaches, flan and whipped cream).

One of the best ways to sample 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. Local wines from the inland Utiel-Requena area are reliable and an excellent value.

Coffee is another favorite, and it comes in several different ways: espresso, *cortado* (espresso with a drop of milk), *cafe con leche* (espresso with a lot of milk) or *carajillo* (espresso with a shot of brandy or rum). Spanish coffee is very strong. If you want a weaker cup, ask for *un Americano*.

You may notice that an awful lot of people are drinking milk at the outdoor cafes. It's probably *horchata*, a cool, refreshing, nonalcoholic beverage made from a sweet root which is found in Valencia. And Spanish hot chocolate will surprise you—it's so sweet and thick you could almost eat it with a spoon.

Lunch in Valencia starts at 1:30 pm, and dinner often begins at 9 pm or later, especially in summer.

## 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. This can vary by region, however. Catalonians (from the region near Barcelona) 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), *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 the 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.

## Personal Safety

In general, Valencia is no more dangerous than other cities in western Europe, though travelers should exercise common sense and remain aware of their surroundings. Petty thievery—pickpockets and purse snatchers—is the most common threat for visitors. 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.

For five decades the Basque Country in northern Spain has had its own home-grown terrorist group, ETA, which has exported its campaigns to the rest of the country. In January 2011, however, ETA declared a permanent ceasefire, and there have been no incidents since. Security advisers still urge caution, however, as the group has broken ceasefires before, and there is always the possibility of a split in the movement with a renegade faction returning to violent tactics.

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 mobiles.

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

## Health

Valencia 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 local pharmacies.

In general, you can eat the food and drink the tap water without issue. The sun is 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

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.



Do take a siesta. Museums, shops and businesses shut down for the afternoon siesta, generally 1-4 pm. It's an opportunity to refresh and recharge yourself, 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:** Passport 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:** 814,208.

**Languages:** Castilian Spanish (official) and Valenciano.

**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; 96, city 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

The months April-June and September-October are the best times to visit. July and August are generally very hot, and it can be a bit cool in October in the higher elevations and in the north. Sweaters are often needed for evenings.

Winter, though generally mild, can be rainy, foggy and windy. The temperature cools 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.

## Transportation

### Air

Valencia Airport (VLC) is an international airport located in Manises, a suburb to the northwest of the city. More information is available at <http://www.aena-aeropuertos.es/csee/Satellite/Aeropuerto-Valencia/en/Home.html>.

### Car

Roads are good, and major international car rental agencies are readily available. The downside to driving is the traffic—it can be horrible.

Driving is on the right side of the road. When driving, talking on a cell phone is prohibited. By law, you must carry a spare set of light bulbs, a warning triangle and a yellow reflective jacket—to be worn in the event of roadside emergency—in the passenger compartment, not the trunk.

Citizens of the U.S. and Canada are required to have an International Driver's License (available in your home country through AAA or a similar automobile association).

### Train

There's excellent domestic and international rail service, though you'll want to be careful to take the faster trains. Look for the high-speed AVE trains (<http://www.renfe.es>) or the speedy Talgo trains (<http://www.raileurope.com>). Many of the Talgos offer berths for overnight runs, as well as a dining car and bar.



## Livorno, Italy

### Overview

#### Introducti

Situated on the Tyrrhenian Coast, Livorno, Italy, is Tuscany's second largest city, next to Florence.

In addition to offering some of the best seafood in the region, the city's pebbly beaches stretch south from the town's seafront, and there is a compact historic quarter. The old Porto Mediceo part of town was laid out in the 1500s by Florentine architect Bernardo Buonattenti for the Medicis. The five-sided Fosso Real canal is the highlight and is bridged in the east by the Piazza della Republica. Take a boat trip along the *fossi* (canals) for an interesting perspective of the city.



The tourist office is just off the Via Grande, in a building that separates the Piazza Grande from the Piazza del Municipio. There, you can book day trips, or the canal boat tour in Livorno. It also sells tickets for the one-hour hop-on, hop-off bus tour of Livorno that starts from the Piazza Grande.

### Port Information

#### Location

The port is a major cruise stop for the Western Mediterranean and serves as a jumping-off point for day trips to Pisa (15 minutes away by train), the walled city of Lucca (35 minutes away), Florence (an hour and a half away by train or car), and the hill town of San Gimignano (also an hour and a half away by car). Taxis line up outside the ships, and the train station is 15 minutes away.

The cruise terminal at the Calata Punto Franco is 0.3 mi/0.5 km away from the city center, and shuttles or taxis can drop you off at the Piazza Grande. Take Bus 1 "Stazione" to the train station, a five-minute ride. From there, trains run regularly to Pisa, Lucca and Florence.



## Florence, Italy

### Overview

#### Introduction

Florence, Italy, is one of the most beautiful cities in the world—and for many visitors, it is the most splendid. While travel to the city usually centers on its attractions, including museums, palaces and churches that overflow with masterful paintings and sculpture, it is not limited to those destinations.

Visitors encounter the spirits of da Vinci, Dante, Boccaccio, Michelangelo and the Medicis, and the days of the Renaissance seem close at hand.



As the birthplace of the Renaissance, Florence combines unequaled beauty with centuries of history in a heady mix. Visitors' first glimpse of the Duomo is likely to take their breath away.

Florence is essentially a proud, provincial city, with a conservative mentality yet very liberal politics. Visitors can sense that its citizens pay a price for living in what has become, essentially, an open-air museum. Florentines—especially those who deal with masses of tourists daily—can be haughty and standoffish toward visitors. But there are many who will offer visitors a warm smile and a helpful gesture.

The vitality of this small city, the robustness of its cuisine, the enduring beauty of its architecture and the richness of its treasures cannot fail to educate, exhilarate and dazzle those who visit Florence.

### Highlights

**Sights**—The Duomo (The Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore) and its dome; Battistero di San Giovanni (the Baptistery) and its intricate doors; Palazzo Pitti; Ponte Vecchio; Basilica di San Miniato al Monte with the splendid view from the Piazzale Michelangelo; the tomb sculptures by Michelangelo at the Cappelle Medicee; the view of downtown from the rooftop of The Continentale hotel.

**Museums**—*David* and Michelangelo's other sculptures at the Galleria dell'Accademia; the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo (with the original door panels of the Baptistery); the Museo Nazionale del Bargello (with works by Cellini, Donatello and Michelangelo); the Uffizi Gallery; the Galleria Palatina and Royal Apartments in the Pitti Palace.

**Memorable Meals**—A massive, rare *bistecca alla fiorentina* at Il Latini; *fritto del convento* (Florentine chicken and vegetables lightly fried) at the superb Il Franciscano in the shadow of Santa Croce's convent; any of the restaurants on Piazza Santo Spirito.



**Walks**—A leisurely stroll along the terraced paths of Boboli Gardens; walking through Cascine Park and its enormous Tuesday market; a sunset stroll from Piazzale Michelangelo to Ponte Vecchio; exploring the Piazza Duomo pedestrian zone.

**Especially for Kids**—The Museo Stibbert and its park; the Gozzoli fresco in the Cappella dei Magi in Palazzo Medici-Riccardi; the Duomo's bell tower and dome; Galileo's telescope in the Museo Galileo.

## Geography

The historic city center of Florence, the Centro Storico, is where you'll find most of the city's monuments and attractions. The area was once encircled by medieval city walls. In the 1860s, when Florence was briefly capital of the newly formed Kingdom of Italy, the walls were replaced by large boulevards that today form a ring road (*viali di circonvallazione*) around the old city. The city falls naturally into two sections: the Duomo side of the Arno River, called *di qua d'Arno*, and—across the river—the Oltrarno side. (Oltrarno means "beyond the Arno.")

On the Duomo side, where visitors usually spend most of their time, Piazza della Signoria and the Duomo itself are grand, historic centers of religious and political power. The Oltrarno has its share of monuments such as the Palazzo Pitti and the churches of Santo Spirito and Santa Maria del Carmine, but it is less imposing and can feel more accessible. The last bastion of old Florentine popular culture is in the Oltrarno: The San Frediano neighborhood is still known for its artisans who handcraft shoes, restore furniture and practice goldsmithing, although their workshops are slowly disappearing.

A note about Florentine addresses: A street number such as 36/R means "36 rosso (red)," and 5/N would mean "5 nero (black)." All storefront commercial properties are marked with red street numbers (the coloring is usually worn off, making them simply stone-colored); residences have black numbers (sometimes they may look blue). Don't be surprised if the sequence of numbers is not continuous between the two colors: You may have 5/R followed immediately by 27/N. If there's no letter designation, the address is probably in the black sequence.

## History

Julius Caesar established Florentia, the "flourishing one," in 59 BC as a military post along the banks of the Arno River, and Roman walls embraced what is now the city center. The city did not truly come into its own until the 12th and 13th centuries, becoming an independent republic in 1198. In this period, a few merchant and banking families began to distinguish themselves in the world market, establishing guilds and bringing international commerce to the city. The florin, named after the city, became a standard unit of currency in Europe.

During the 13th and 14th centuries, the Guelphs (supporters of the pope) and the Ghibellines (upholders of the Holy Roman Emperor) battled each other. After these factions faded into history, the Medici family of bankers ruled the city. Their courts employed artists, designers, architects, artisans, musicians and poets, fostering an explosion of artistic production that has shaped the city to this day. Their dynasty lasted, on and off, until 1737, when Florence came under the rule of Maria Theresa of Austria.

At this time, a pact was drawn up in Vienna to guarantee the longevity and integrity of the Florentine artistic patrimony. The masterpieces of the Austrian crown and the private collections of the Medici family were handed over to the Tuscan government. The agreement stipulated that no work of art could be taken from the enormous collection. It also emphasized that the priceless works would be showcased to attract visitors to the region.



Italy itself was unified in 1860, and Florence became the capital of the Kingdom of Italy from 1865 to 1870. (Rome later became capital of the Republic of Italy.) The city had several setbacks in the 20th century: During World War II, all the bridges were blown up except the Ponte Vecchio, and many buildings along the river were destroyed. In 1966, a particularly devastating flood swept through the city, causing an incredible amount of damage to buildings and artworks. (You can still find markers throughout the city that indicate the water level that day.) More works were lost or seriously damaged in 1993 when a car bomb exploded in front of the Uffizi Gallery. After all three events, Florentines quickly rallied to restore the city and preserve its vital Renaissance legacy.

## Potpourri

Although there is no shortage of torture museums in Tuscany, Florentines were the first people in the world to outlaw the death penalty through the reforms of Grand Duke Pietro Leopoldo in 1786.

The great medieval poet Dante Alighieri, author of the *Divine Comedy*, bitterly complained about the "shameless" Florentine women who freely showed their bare breasts in public. Rest assured, they don't do that anymore.

The "Stendhal Syndrome" (fainting from an overdose of art exposure) was first described by the French author Stendhal who experienced dizziness after visiting the church of Santa Croce.

Florence is extremely popular with language students because Florentines are said to speak the purest Italian.

The Uffizi is the busiest museum in Italy, with more than 2 million visitors per year. If you don't have a reservation, expect to wait many hours before you can enter.

After Oscar Wilde was arrested and tried in the U.K. in 1895, many affluent gay and lesbian British intellectuals flocked to Florence to enjoy the tolerant lifestyle there.

It is only mildly surprising that Florence was the birthplace of *Pinocchio* creator Carlo Lorenzini, also known as Carlo Collodi (but not in the Tuscan village from which he took his name). Another Florentine native was Realist painter John Singer Sargent, born to American parents in Florence in 1856.

Florence's leather and its beef steak, the famous *bistecca alla fiorentina*, come from the Chianina cow, a huge, pure white animal with large, expressive brown eyes.

## See & Do

### Sightseeing

Visitors rarely allot enough time for Florence, partly because until you've been there, it's difficult to comprehend how much there is to experience in the city. Any visit, brief or extended, should begin with the magnificent Duomo. Don't be content with admiring its stunning exterior: Go inside and gaze at the frescoes and take in the view from the top of the dome.

Afterward, check out the exquisite detail of the famed bronze doors of the adjacent Baptistery. The striking Palazzo Vecchio on Piazza della Signoria still functions as city hall. Take a tour and learn about the palace's integral role in Florentine history—as well as the reason for its unusual trapezoidal dimensions.



The most celebrated art museum in the city is the Uffizi Gallery, considered by many to be, along with the Louvre and El Prado, one of the most important museums in the world. The Uffizi has 13th- to 18th-century Italian and European masterworks—paintings by Botticelli, Hugo van der Goes, Titian, Rubens, Caravaggio, Raphael and Rembrandt, among others. The line at the Uffizi can get very long, so we strongly encourage advance reservations. Many hotels can make reservations for the Uffizi and other attractions for a small surcharge, similar to booking online in advance.

Another fabulous art museum is the Bargello, with its impressive collection of medieval and Renaissance armor, furnishings and sculpture—including Donatello's lion sculpture, the *Marzocco*, the symbol of Florence. The Accademia, near Piazza San Marco, is chiefly known for housing Michelangelo's *David*, although his many other sculptures there are worth the visit in their own right.

Cross the Arno on the Ponte Vecchio, which has spanned the river since 1345. The bridge still has shops and rooms jutting out over the sides—a common feature in the Middle Ages, although few examples remain today. The Vasari Corridor, which runs above the bridge, links the Uffizi with the Palazzo Pitti.

Sights on the other side of the Arno include the Palazzo Pitti, the archetype of all European royal residences and one of the best preserved, with beautifully decorated baroque interiors and the gorgeous Boboli Gardens on the hillside behind it. Be sure to see the Palazzo's Palatine Gallery, which contains 16th- and 17th-century paintings by Raphael, Titian, Veronese, Rubens and Van Dyck.

The fully furnished Royal Apartments date back to the last kings of Italy. Don't confuse the Palazzo Pitti with the Medici Chapels, which are connected to the Church of San Lorenzo—but they are also well worth a visit.

## Historic Sites

### Basilica di San Miniato al Monte

Via del Monte alle Croci (also accessible from the travertine stairs on Viale Galileo Galilei, or take a No. 12 or 13 bus to the Piazzale Michelangelo and walk from there)

Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-234-2731

<http://www.sanminiatoalmon.te.it>

A five-minute walk from Piazzale Michelangelo in the Oltrarno takes you to the Basilica di San Miniato al Monte. One of the most beautiful examples of Romanesque churches in Italy, it offers a breathtaking view of Florence. The church contains a number of treasures, such as Spinello Aretino's 14th-century frescoes in the sacristy depicting scenes from the life of St. Benedict. During the siege of 1529 and 1530, Michelangelo designed the battlements that surround the property. Also, a number of notable people are buried there, among them Carlo Lorenzini, who wrote *Pinocchio* under the pen name Collodi.

Monday-Saturday 9:30 am-7 pm, Sunday 8:15 am-7 pm. Free.

### Battistero di San Giovanni

Piazza San Giovanni

Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-230-2885

[http://www.museumsinflorence.com/musei/Baptistry\\_of\\_florence.html](http://www.museumsinflorence.com/musei/Baptistry_of_florence.html)



There are few buildings in Florence older than the Baptistery of St. John, which is thought to date from the sixth or seventh century. Its present look, however, stems from 11th- and 12th-century renovations, and its monumental doors trace the development of Florentine sculpture from Gothic to Renaissance style. Examine the doors in an order that traces this development: Start with the south set (facing Via Calzaiuoli) designed by Andrea Pisano, and then move to the north doors (facing Via de Martelli). Finally, examine the gilded east doors, which Michelangelo declared worthy of being the "Doors of Paradise," and that is how they are known. The work of Lorenzo Ghiberti (who also designed the north doors), the east doors represent a revolutionary introduction of perspective into relief sculpture. Those on the Baptistery are reproductions—the originals are on display at the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo to protect them from pollution and too much contact. Inside the Baptistery, the ceiling is covered in beautiful, Byzantine-style mosaics.

Monday-Saturday noon-7 pm (first Saturday of the month 8:30 am-2 pm), Sunday and public holidays 8:30 am-2 pm. Last entry 30 minutes before closing; enter through the north door. 4 euros.

### **Boboli Gardens**

Palazzo Pitti, Oltrarno (behind the palace)  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-229-8732

<http://www.giardinodiboboli.it>

Eleonora di Toledo, wife of Cosimo I of the Medici family, had the garden built behind the Palazzo Pitti in 1549. The greatest talents of the day were summoned to the task, and the result is a true *giardino all'Italiana*, with lush hedges, evergreen trees, narrow paths, grottoes, fountains, ponds, citrus trees in terra-cotta pots, and a number of antique and late-Renaissance statues. It is today one of the most-visited sights in the city. Also on the grounds are the Museo delle Porcellane (Porcelain Museum) and an amphitheater that Edith Wharton called one of the triumphs of Italian garden architecture. A coffeehouse on the premises invites you to sip an espresso or an expensive drink and to enjoy the unforgettable view. There are three entrances (and ticket offices): on the right side of the Palazzo Pitti courtyard; on Via Romana, the street to the right of the palace; and on Piazzale di Porta Romana, through a gate in the city wall to the right of Porta Romana. If there's a long line at the palace entrance, try one of the others—they're usually less crowded.

The gardens are open 8:15 am until dusk; closed the first and last Monday of the month, 1 January, 1 May and Christmas. 7 euros (admission includes entrance to the Bardini Gardens, the Museo delle Porcellane, the Museo degli Argenti and the Costume Gallery) or you can purchase a combined ticket for the entire museum complex, good for three days, for 11.50 euros.

### **Campanile di Giotto**

Piazza Duomo (adjacent to the Duomo)  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-230-2885

<http://www.museumflorence.com>

The bell tower of the Duomo, built by Giotto, is just under 85 m/279 ft tall and provides picturesque views of the Duomo, the Palazzo Vecchio, the Church of San Lorenzo and more through its imposing mullioned windows. And you only have to climb 414 steps; there is no elevator.



Daily 8:30 am-7:30 pm. Last entry 40 minutes before closing. 6 euros. A combined ticket for all the key monuments of the Cathedral, including the Campanile, the Museo dell'Opera, the Duomo, the Baptistry and the Crypt is 10 euros. Tickets can be purchased in advance online.

### Cappella Brancacci

Piazza del Carmine 14 (Oltrarno, northwest of the Palazzo Pitti)  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-276-8224

<http://www.museiciviciorentini.it/en/brancacci>

One of the less publicized jewels of Florence, the Brancacci Chapel is a side chapel of the rather somber church of Santa Maria del Carmine. Inside is some of the very best work of Masaccio (with contributions from Filippino Lippi and Masolino): a series of frescoes (restored in the 1980s) depicting scenes from Genesis and the life of St. Peter. Only 30 visitors are allowed in the cappella at one time.

Monday-Saturday 9:30 am-1 pm and 2-5 pm, Sunday 9:30 am-12:30 pm. The ticket office closes at 4 pm. Reservations suggested during high season and for large groups. 6 euros.

### Cappella dei Magi

Palazzo Medici-Riccardi, Via Cavour 3  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-276-0340

<http://www.palazzo-medici.it/ita/info.htm>

The Chapel of the Wise Men is a small family chapel within the Palazzo Medici Riccardi: It's a little jewel, thanks to Benozzo Gozzoli's gorgeous frescoes. Restoration of the chapel in the early 1990s revealed the vibrant colors of the original, especially the gold leaf used on the figure of Balthasar. The Medicis and their contemporaries of note are represented as part of a procession of wise men that winds around three walls of the chapel toward the nativity scene above the altar. Entrance to the chapel is limited to a maximum of eight visitors every seven minutes.

Thursday-Tuesday 9 am-5 pm. 7 euros. Admission includes the courtyard garden and Galleria di Luca Giordano (one of the finest baroque interiors in town) of the Palazzo Medici-Riccardi.

### Cappelle Medicee

Piazza Madonna degli Aldobrandini 6  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-294-883

<http://www.cappellemedicee.it>

The Medici family commissioned the Medici Chapels, part of a larger complex that includes the Church of San Lorenzo, as its own memorial. Some of Michelangelo's most famous and moving sculptures (some unfinished) adorn the tombs of the Medici within the New Sacristy, which he designed. The chapels also contain some of the finest examples of *pietre dure* (hard-stone inlay), also called—inaccurately—Florentine mosaic.

Daily 8:15 am-6 pm; closed the second and fourth Sunday and the first, third and fifth Monday of the month. 6 euros. Reservations can be made online.





## Loggia della Signoria

Piazza della Signoria (on the Uffizi side of the piazza, near the Palazzo Vecchio)  
Florence, Italy

<http://www.piazza-signoria.com>

Also called the Loggia dei Lanzi, this arcade along the side of the Piazza della Signoria shelters a number of important sculptures, including Cellini's *Perseus Slaying Medusa* and Giambologna's *Rape of the Sabines*. In the square itself are copies of several famous statues that are housed elsewhere in Florence, including Michelangelo's *David* and Donatello's *Judith and Holofernes*. The Loggia's roof was modified and turned into a terrace by the architect Bernardo Buontalenti so that the Medici family could watch the ceremonies in the piazza from a great vantage point.

## Palazzo Pitti

Palazzo Pitti 1  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-294-883 or 055-238-8611

<http://www.polomuseale.firenze.it/en/musei/pitti.php?m=palazzopitti>

Originally built in 1458 by the influential banker Luca Pitti, the palace was purchased about a century later by Cosimo I of the Medici family. He and his wife enlarged it, commissioned the Vasari Corridor (Il Corridoio Vasariano), which connects the palace with the Uffizi across the river, and designed the adjacent Boboli Gardens. Successive generations of Medicis enlarged the palace further in order to house their courts. The palace's museums are located inside The Royal Apartments.

There are eight separate museums in this huge edifice. The most important is the Palatine Gallery, which houses works by old masters. Among the others are museums devoted to silver and other precious materials, porcelain, art from the Napoleonic era to the 1940s, and period dress, which, frankly, aren't that impressive when compared to the Palatine. The ticket office for the museums is on the right side of the courtyard.

Tuesday-Sunday 8:15 am-6:50 pm. The ticket office closes at 6:05 pm. A combined ticket for the entire museum complex of the Pitti Palace including the apartments and gardens is the best deal—it is 11.50 euros and is valid for three days. A ticket covering just the Galleria Palatina and the Modern Art Gallery, two popular museums, is 8.50 euros. Audioguides are 5.50 euros. No credit cards.

## Palazzo Vecchio

Piazza della Signoria  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-276-8325

<http://museiciviciorentini.comune.fi.it/palazzovecchio>

The palace and surrounding square have been at the heart of Florentine politics since the 1200s. The palace is still the city hall and plays a vital role in Florentine life. The building took on its trapezoidal shape because of the Guelph government's reluctance to build on the soil of the formerly Ghibelline neighborhood, which they, as victors, had razed to the ground.

Part of the building is open to visitors, including the impressive Salone dei Cinquecento, decorated for Cosimo I by Vasari. In addition to other beautifully decorated rooms, don't miss the original bronze sculpture of *Judith and Holofernes* by Donatello and the *Cherub with a Dolphin* fountain by Verrocchio.



October-March Thursday 9 am-2 pm, Friday-Wednesday 9 am-7 pm; April-September Thursday 9 am-2 pm, Friday-Wednesday 9 am-midnight. The ticket office closes one hour before the building does. Tickets are 10 euros for the museum, 14 euros for the museum and tower. A multimedia guide is available for 5 euros.

## Piazzale Michelangelo

This panoramic terrace on a hill overlooking Florence from the Oltrarno was designed by Florentine architect Giuseppe Poggi in 1869. It offers a splendid view encompassing not only the city, but also the surrounding hills. This area was one of the hot spots in the siege of 1529 and 1530, when Michelangelo was appointed military engineer. To commemorate the artist's role in defending Florence, in the 1800s the city named the open square and avenue after him.

The Piazzale, as it's known to Florentines, gets very crowded on weekend afternoons and evenings, especially in fine weather. Try to catch the view at sunset—it's stunning. The walk up from the Piazza Poggi near the Arno is steep, but a No. 12 or 13 bus can take you there. For a pleasant walk down, take the steps from the front of the balustrade. On the way down stop at the Rose Garden, a pretty garden with a panoramic view and more than 350 kinds of roses. Interspersed in the garden are 11 sculptures from Belgian artist Jean-Michel Folon.

## Ponte Vecchio

The "old bridge" is an enduring symbol of Florence. It spans the most narrow point of the Arno, on the site of the original Roman bridge, with a unique structure dating from 1345. The shops you see there today housed butcher shops and grocers until 1593, when Ferdinand I de' Medici decided that such humble (and smelly) shops were unsuitable for a bridge connecting the Medici residence (Palazzo Pitti) and the government offices (the Uffizi). He decreed that only goldsmiths and jewelers could tend shop on the bridge, and it has remained that way ever since. During World War II, it was the only bridge spanning the Arno that the Germans did not destroy—they focused instead on demolishing the medieval buildings on either side.

The two lines of shops break in the center, affording views of the river in both directions. The bridge crosses the Arno River at Via Por Santa Maria. Heading into the city center (*di qua d'Arno*), Via Por Santa Maria and Via Calimala take you directly to the Duomo; on the other side of the river (Oltrarno), Via de' Guicciardini leads to the Palazzo Pitti.

## Santa Croce

Piazza Santa Croce 16  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-246-6105

<http://www.santacroceopera.it>

This masterpiece of Florentine Gothic architecture is a basilica run by Franciscan monks. Construction of the church began in the late 1200s and took nearly a century to complete. Beautiful pillars are topped by sweeping Gothic arches. The many altars and small chapels that line the walls of the basilica are filled with tombs, sculpture and paintings. Because many notable Italians—including Michelangelo, Galileo, Machiavelli and others—are buried in the church, it ranks as a national shrine. The church is located on a lovely understated piazza of the same name, with just a handful of cafes and restaurants and a broad open space with benches to stop and appreciate the beauty of the church's marble facade, a relatively recent addition from the 19th century.



Monday-Saturday 9:30 am-5:30 pm, Sunday 2-5:30 pm. 6 euros (includes entrance to the basilica and the Museo dell'Opera di Santa Croce). Last entrance 30 minutes before closing.

### Santa Maria Novella

Piazza Santa Maria Novella 18  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-219-257

<http://www.chiesasantamarianovella.it>

Visitors arriving by train have the church of Santa Maria Novella as their first, impressive introduction to Florentine art and architecture. The airy nave contains a striking crucifix painted by Giotto, the *Trinity* by Masaccio and Brunelleschi's wooden *Crucifix* (also called the "egg crucifix" because legend has it that Donatello was so impressed by it, he dropped the satchel of eggs he was carrying).

Monday-Thursday 9 am-5:30 pm, Friday 11 am-5:30 pm, Saturday 9 am-5 pm. 5 euros. Ticket office closes 30 minutes before the church closes.

### Santo Spirito

Piazza di Santo Spirito (Oltrarno, northwest of the Palazzo Pitti)  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-210-030

<http://www.basilicasantospirito.it>

This stark but beautiful Renaissance church is Filippo Brunelleschi's last great work. Inside, *Il Crocifisso* (the Crucifixion), attributed to the young Michelangelo, is on display.

Thursday-Tuesday 9:30 am-noon and 4-5:30 pm. Free.

### Sinagoga

Via Luigi Carlo Farini 4  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-234-6654

<http://www.moked.it/jewishflorence>

Florence's synagogue is also the location of the Museo di Arte e Storia Ebraica (Museum of Jewish Art and History). The synagogue was completed in 1882, and the museum was established in 1981. The two-story museum gives an overview of the Jewish community and a history of its relationship with the city of Florence. English-language guided tours run every hour.

Sunday-Thursday 10 am-6:30 pm (October-March until 5:30 pm), Friday 10 am-2 pm (October-March till 3 pm). 6.50 euros adults.

### The Duomo

Piazza del Duomo  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-230-2885

<http://www.ilgrandemuseodelduomo.it>



The Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore—the Duomo—is one of the largest cathedrals in the world. It's topped by Filippo Brunelleschi's dome, a stupendous feat of 15th-century engineering. The architect used a method of his own creation to build it, inventing equipment and machines to meet his needs. The interior vault of the dome features Giorgio Vasari and Federico Zuccari's *The Last Judgment*. It's the largest fresco painting in the world, and it took 16 years to restore.

You can go beneath the nave to visit excavations of the earlier Romanesque church on the site; Brunelleschi's tomb is there. A climb to the top of the dome affords a wonderful panorama of Florence from the base of the lantern, but the 463-step ascent (no elevator) is not for everyone. Enter through the Porta della Mandorla of the Duomo (north side). Lines are shortest around 4 pm.

Visitors can climb the cathedral's dome Monday-Friday 8:30 am-7 pm, Saturday 8:30 am-5:40 pm. The cathedral is open Monday-Friday 10 am-5 pm (closes at 4 pm on Thursday in May and October, 4:30 pm January-April, November and December), Saturday 10 am-4:45 pm, Sunday and holidays 1:30-4:45 pm. Last entry 40 minutes before closing. Entrance to the cathedral is free. Admission to the dome itself is 8 euros, but for 10 euros you can get access to all the monuments of the Cathedral complex—the Duomo, Campanile, Museum, Baptistry and Crypt.

## Museums

Museum times and prices change frequently, and museums occasionally close for renovation, trade union meetings, lack of personnel, strikes or to take inventory. Some close for the day at 1 or 2 pm, and most are closed during religious holidays. Check with any of the tourist offices for the latest information.

Entrance tickets for state-run museums can be booked in advance by calling Firenze Musei. A service fee of 3 euros is charged (even for reduced-price or free tickets). The service fee for the Uffizi Gallery and Galleria dell'Accademia, the two sights where lines for entrance are the longest, is 4 euros. Having your tickets in hand will save time, especially during peak tourist season (late spring and summer). Book tickets at least a day in advance. Monday-Friday 8:30 am-6:30 pm, Saturday 8:30 am-12:30 pm. Phone 055-294-883. For more information, visit <http://www.firenzemusei.it>.

The Firenze Card offers admission to more than 30 museums in Florence, as well as bus and tram transportation throughout the city. The card is valid for 72 hours and costs 72 euros. In many cases you can avoid ticket lines by using the card. Check the advantages of the card against your planned itinerary carefully; it will only save you money if you plan to see enough of the attractions it covers. The complete list of museums and attractions it includes is updated regularly. For more information, visit <http://www.firenzecard.it>.

## Galleria d'Arte Moderna

Palazzo Pitti  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-238-8601 or 055-294-883 for reservations

<http://www.polomuseale.firenze.it/en/musei/?m=artemoderna>

Art of the modern era, from Napoleon's time to the 1940s, situated on the second floor of the Palazzo Pitti. Perhaps the most interesting paintings are those by members of the Macchiaioli School—Italy's answer to the Impressionists—including Martelli, Fattori and Signorini.

Tuesday-Sunday 8:15 am-6:50 pm. 8.50 euros for regular admission, which also includes entrance to the Galleria Palantina.



## Galleria del Costume

Palazzo Pitti  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-238-8801 or 055-294-883 for reservations

<http://www.polomuseale.firenze.it/en/musei/?m=costume>

Displays period costumes, clothing and accessories, allowing you to follow the development of Italian fashion over the past 200 years. Costumes are displayed chronologically and set within the context of their time period.

Tuesday-Sunday 8:15 am-6:50 pm in the summer months of June, July and August. Closes one to two hours earlier for the rest of the year. 7.50 euros for regular admission.

## Galleria dell'Accademia

Via Ricasoli 60  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-238-8609 or 055-294-883 for reservations

<http://www.polomuseale.firenze.it/en/musei/?m=accademia>

Of the three statues of Michelangelo's *David* in Florence, the original can be admired there. In 1873, it was moved from its original position in front of Palazzo Vecchio, where a copy stands today. You may also view Michelangelo's four *Prigioni* (prisoners) in the Accademia. In their unfinished form, the statues seem to struggle to emerge from the marble. There's also a notable collection of 13th- to 18th-century paintings that would constitute a remarkable museum collection on their own.

Tuesday-Sunday 8:15 am-6:50 pm. Ticket office closes 30 minutes before closing time, but you will have to stand in a very long line to get there. Better to reserve almost a week ahead for an appointment. 8 euros adults.

## Galleria Palatina

Palazzo Pitti  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-238-8614 or 055-294-883 for reservations

<http://www.polomuseale.firenze.it/en/musei/?m=palatina>

The main gallery in the Palazzo Pitti, the Palatine Gallery is full of works by Titian, Raphael, Rubens, Tintoretto, Caravaggio and others. Make sure you look up: The ceiling decorations are masterpieces in their own right.

Tuesday-Sunday 8:15 am-6:50 pm. Ticket office closes 30 minutes before closing time. 8.50 euros for regular admission, which includes entrance to the Galleria d'Arte Moderna as well.

## Gucci Museo

Piazza della Signoria  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-7592-3302

<http://www.guccimuseo.com>



Housed in the historic Palazzo della Mercanzia, founded in 1308 on the site of an ancient Roman theater, the Gucci Museum is a cultural center dedicated to Gucci's archives and contemporary art. It chronicles Gucci's 90-year history from its beginnings when founder Guccio Gucci made a name for himself in fine leather goods. There is a chic cafe, restaurant and gift shop on-site.

Daily 10 am-8 pm. 7 euros.

## Museo Archeologico

Via della Pergola 65 (the public entrance is at Piazza Santissima Annunziata 9B)  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-23575

<http://www.archeotoscana.beniculturali.it/index.php?it/146/firenze-museo-archeologico-nazionale>

The Archaeological Museum of Florence is one of the most important in Italy. Originally a Medici collection, it was expanded by the Lorraine dynasty in the late 18th century. There are many priceless remains from the Etruscan period, including the *Chimera of Arezzo*, the *Orator* and the *Minerva of Arezzo*. Greek and Egyptian artifacts are also on display.

Tuesday-Friday 8:30 am-7 pm, Saturday and Sunday 8:30 am-2 pm. Ticket office closes 45 minutes before closing time. Admission is 4 euros, audioguide is 5 euros.

## Museo degli Argenti (The Medici Treasury)

Palazzo Pitti  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-238-8709 or 055-294-883 for reservations

<http://www.polomuseale.firenze.it/en/musei/?m=argenti>

This museum gets its name from its silver collection, but it contains many other treasures collected by the ruling families of Florence: vases of lapis and other rare gemstones, jewelry, carved ivory and paintings. The setting itself, in rooms designed by artist Giovanni da San Giovanni in 1634, is spectacular.

Daily 8:15 am-4:30 pm November-February; open till 6:30 pm March-May and September; till 7:30 pm June-August; till 5:30 pm October. Closed the first and last Monday of the month. 7 euros (includes entrance to the Galleria del Costume, Museo della Porcellane, the Boboli Gardens and the Bardini Gardens).

## Museo dell'Opera del Duomo

Piazza del Duomo 9  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-230-2885

<http://www.ilgrandemuseodelduomo.it>

This museum keeps most of the major works of art from the Baptistery and the Duomo safe from the elements and crowds. Included in its collection are Michelangelo's *Pieta* (made for his own tomb) and Donatello's renderings of Mary Magdalene, St. John the Evangelist and the prophets Habakkuk and Jeremiah. The original eastern doors from the Baptistery are on display there. The Baptistery's stunning silver altar—a masterpiece of Florentine silversmithing—is there, as well.



Monday-Saturday 9 am-7:30 pm, Sunday and holidays 9 am-1:45 pm. Ticket office closes 40 minutes before the museum closes. 10 euros.

### Museo di San Marco

Piazza San Marco 1  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-238-8608 for reservations

<http://www.polomuseale.firenze.it/en/musei/?m=sanmarco>

This beautiful museum is in the former convent adjoining the church of San Marco. It is best known for the numerous frescoes by Fra Angelico within the monks' cells and elsewhere. Don't miss the *Last Supper* by Ghirlandaio. Because it's located across the square from the Accademia, it's easy to visit both in one day.

Monday-Friday 8:15 am-1:15 pm, Saturday 8:15 am-4:15 pm. 4 euros adults.

### Museo Galileo (Institute and Museum of the History of Science)

Piazza dei Guidici 1  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-265-311

<http://www.museogalileo.it>

This renovated museum houses the Medici collection of scientific instruments and has a whole section dedicated to Galileo Galilei. Highlights are the vast collection of telescopes and globes and a very macabre display of Galileo's preserved finger. The museum is home to the only original instruments of Galileo that have survived.

Daily 9:30 am-6 pm (Tuesday till 1 pm). 9 euros adults.

### Museo Nazionale del Bargello

Via del Proconsolo 4  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-238-8606 or 055-294-883 for reservations

<http://www.polomuseale.firenze.it/en/musei/?m=bargello>

The Bargello is impressive, powerful, foreboding and hostile. Once the judicial offices and prison of Florence, it was the scene of many hangings. Now a museum, it holds one of the finest collections of Renaissance sculpture in Italy, with masterpieces by Michelangelo, Verrocchio, Giambologna and Cellini, among others.

Daily 8:15 am-1:50 pm; closed the first, third and fifth Sunday and the second and fourth Monday of the month. Ticket office closes 40 minutes early. 4 euros adults.

### Museo Stibbert

Via Stibbert 26 (in the hills north of the city center; take a No. 4 bus from Piazza dell'Unita)  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-475-520

<http://www.museostibbert.it>



This is a great place for children—Museo Stibbert features lots of knights in armor on horseback and a park that surrounds the building. The museum is the city's legacy from the Englishman Frederick Stibbert (1838-1906), who amassed some 50,000 pieces in his beautiful estate on the hillside of Montughi. Arms and armor from around the world make up the bulk of the collection, but you'll see art from Europe, the Middle East and Pacific Asia, as well as porcelain, furnishings, tapestries and relics from Napoleon I. The bonus is the Arts and Crafts-style villa itself.

Monday-Wednesday 10 am-2 pm, Friday-Sunday 10 am-6 pm; ticket office closes one hour before the museum. 8 euros adults.

## Museums of Fiesole

Via Portigiani 1  
Fiesole, Italy

**Phone:** 055-596-1293

<http://www.museidifiesole.it>

Fiesole has an archaeological area that includes the remnants of Etruscan walls, a Roman theater, an Etruscan temple and Roman baths, plus an archaeological museum. The Bandini Museum (open Friday-Sunday) houses an art collection that includes Byzantine works and polychrome glazed terra-cotta sculptures from the della Robbia workshop in Florence.

Daily 10 am-7 pm. 12 euros adults.

## Uffizi Gallery

Loggiato degli Uffizi 6  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-238-8651 or 055-294-883 for reservations

<http://www.polomuseale.firenze.it/en/musei/?m=uffizi>

One of the greatest museums in the world, this collection was originally the private property of the Medici family. As the Medici dynasty was ending in the early 1700s, Anna Maria Ludovica de' Medici—the last of the family—determined that the museum would become the eternal birthright of the city of Florence and its citizens.

The museum contains the greatest collection of Italian Renaissance paintings and sculpture in the world, starting with pre-Renaissance masters such as Giotto and progressing through Masaccio, da Vinci, Michelangelo and innumerable others. Don't miss the Botticelli rooms—*Spring* and *The Birth of Venus* are breathtaking. There's also an excellent selection of northern masters, especially Rubens, Van Dyck and Rembrandt. The Uffizi also has an entire wing devoted to works by Caravaggio and others that were previously relegated to storage. The terrace cafe atop the Loggia della Signoria affords wonderful views of the Piazza della Signoria, the Palazzo Vecchio and the town of Fiesole on the horizon.

Various rooms close on occasion because of staff shortages or cleaning, so check the list of closures at the entrance if you're hoping to see a particular work or works by a particular artist. Also note that some pieces from the collection occasionally go on loan. Split up your visit if you have time to do so. Lines can be horrendous, especially in high season—make life easier with advance reservations if at all possible.

Tuesday-Sunday 8:15 am-6:50 pm. The ticket office closes at 6:05 pm. Reservations can be made online (<http://www.b-ticket.com/b-ticket/Uffizi/default.aspx>). 6.50 euros, 11 euros during special exhibitions.





## Zoologia "La Specola"

Via Romana 17, Third Floor (just down the street from Palazzo Vecchio)  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-275-5100

<http://www.visitare-firenze.it/museo-la-specola>

This science museum opened to the public in 1775 and displays some creepy sights: perfectly accurate wax replicas of the human body, inside and out. Impressive in their precision, the bodies and their organs are presented from all angles. Other rooms are dedicated to taxidermied animals from all over the world.

October-May Tuesday-Sunday 9:30 am-4:30 pm; June-September 10:30 am-5:30 pm. 6 euros.

## Parks & Gardens

### Cascine Park

Situated a walkable distance west of the city center along the north bank of the Arno, the largest park in Florence was once a game preserve and royal farm. The grounds were opened to the public in 1791 by Pietro Leopoldo I, who embellished them with sculptures and fountains. Shelley wrote his *Ode to the West Wind* while gazing at the *Narcissus* fountain. Cascine Park is populated by joggers and children at play during the day (as well as the big Tuesday market), but be aware that after dark it becomes an open-air bordello. Bus 17-C stops at Piazzale Kennedy in the center of the park. On weekends, the park is served by a special bus line, designated with a P, that departs from Piazzale Vittorio Veneto.

## Religious Sites

### Cattedrale di San Romolo

Piazza Mino da Fiesole  
Fiesole, Italy

Also known as the Fiesole Cathedral, this church was built in honor of Saint Romulus over the site of his martyrdom in 1028. The cathedral is a mix of architectural history, with its facade still intact, from its 11th-century construction to various works dating up until the 17th century. Inside, you'll find notable early works by Mino da Fiesole, a Florentine sculptor who was recognized for his distinct bust works. The interior is modestly decorated, with a 13th-century styled marble altar and two frescoes from the 15th century depicting St. Benedict and St. Sebastian.

### San Francesco Monastery

Via San Francesco 13  
Fiesole, Italy

This tiny 14th-century church and monastery is perched on one of the scenic high points of Fiesole. Inside, the church's nave is adorned with works by Piero di Cosimo, Cenni di Francesco and Neri di Bicci. In addition to viewing the church's art, wander upstairs to find original monastic cells and rooms. Each cell has study tables and a window overlooking the scenic hillside. You can really imagine life as it was for monks in this monastery.

## Shopping

The city of Florence has always thrived on its mercantile activity and still does today, even though you'll find that Florentine shopkeepers tend to maintain an air of stolid indifference. The city is a shopping



mecca, for better or for worse: Just as some visitors feel overwhelmed by the wealth of artistic treasures Florence has to offer, others feel that the pressure to consume overshadows all other experiences.

Shopping at small, independently run Italian stores might be different from what you're used to. It is customary to greet the owner or shopkeeper with the appropriate *buongiorno* or *buona sera* as you enter. Italians treat their shops as an extension of their own homes, and you'll create a better shopping experience if you are friendly and responsive.

One great thing about shopping in Florence is that you can find a craftsperson to make just about anything you can dream up—from shoes to stationery, books, clothes and furniture. A local artisan can turn your dream into reality and it may not be as costly as you might expect.

An important shopping (or window-shopping) destination for any visitor is a stroll over Ponte Vecchio, where jewelers still exercise their trade behind fantastic and brilliant display windows. Leather goods are a great buy: Those with little time to search them out should head for the Santa Croce area. (There's a selection of leather souvenirs from an actual leather-making school inside the church of Santa Croce itself—they are well-made with tourists in mind, but can be quite pricey.) The stalls near the Central Market of San Lorenzo in Via dell'Ariento carry wares that are well-made and reasonably priced.

Anything made of colorful Florentine marbled paper makes a nice gift or keepsake. Other popular souvenirs are antique prints depicting the city and the surrounding hills, classic posters from a museum shop and wooden Pinocchio dolls.

The markets of Florence display a vast array of leather goods, and most of it is quality Italian leather; however, there are some cheap imitations slipping in. Be sure to check all the stitching and seams. Remember that under current Italian law, buyers of fake goods are regarded as accomplices to a crime and can be fined on the spot for such purchases.

If you have the time and inclination, browse the shops on such streets as Via Calzaioli, Via del Corso, Via Roma and the upscale Via Strozzi, which leads to Via Tornabuoni, the Fifth Avenue of Florence. Fashion-seekers will find major Italian and European designers—Armani, Ferragamo, Versace, Gucci, Louis Vuitton, Cartier, Hermes and trendy Roberto Cavalli—along Via Tornabuoni and Via della Vigna Nuova.

**Shopping Hours:** Most shops are generally open in winter 9 am-1 pm and 3:30-7:30 pm; in summer, the afternoon hours are 4-8 pm. Some large department stores and supermarkets stay open during the lunch break, as do some shops in the city center. Certain types of shops, such as clothing boutiques, supermarkets and large stores, are closed all day Sunday and on Monday morning.

## Department Stores

### Coin

Via dei Calzaiuoli 56-R  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-280-531

<http://www.coin.it>

A stylish department store with men's and women's clothing and footwear, household furnishings, cosmetics and more. A good place to shop for larger sizes, which are often hard to come by in Italy.

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



## La Rinascente

Piazza della Repubblica 1  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-219-113

<http://www.rinascente.it>

Cosmetics, fashion accessories, lingerie, kitchenware and two floors of classic men's and women's clothing, with Missoni knitwear and Versace home furnishings. Great selection of perfumes. Do not miss the great view from the roof terrace, where you can have a coffee.

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

## Oviesse Firenze

Via Panzani 31/R  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-239-8963

<http://www.ovs.it>

Sells reasonably priced clothing for men, women and children. It will handle the paperwork for IVA tax refunds for tourists returning to non-European Union countries. There is a second central location at Via Nazionale 29/R (phone 055-215-346).

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

## Markets

### Mercato delle Cascine

(take a No. 17-C bus to the center of the park, which is the far end of the market)  
Florence, Italy

If bargains are your thing, don't miss this famous Tuesday-morning market which the locals call "Il Mercatone." You'll find clothing, sheets, towels, kitchenware, wicker, lingerie, perfume and food for sale. Much of the clothing is tatty, but keep an eye out for the occasional brand-name item at knock-down prices. Keep a close eye on your wallet or purse, too: Pickpockets and purse snatchers frequent the market. The market stretches for about 1 mi/1.6 km along the banks of the Arno River, from Ponte della Vittoria to Ponte all'Indiano.

Tuesday 8 am-2 pm.

### Mercato delle Pulci

Piazza Annigoni (a little east of the city center)  
Florence, Italy

Florence's flea market, where you'll find some really off-the-wall items.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-5 pm.

### Mercato di San Lorenzo

Piazza del Mercato Centrale (near Piazza San Lorenzo)  
Florence, Italy



Probably the most popular market in town, it's much more tourist-oriented than the Cascine market, partly because of its location. On sale are leather jackets, bags, costume jewelry, scarves, belts and small gift items. Prices are fairly reasonable, and the leather goods are well-made. (Check for natural suede inside and "Made in Italy" stamped on real leather and not a postage-stamp-sized square attached to fake leather.) Visit the indoor fresh-produce market, which is an enjoyable experience even if you're not buying anything. You can also get a meal inside the market at the famous Nerbone, or picnic fixings from Perini.

The outdoor stalls are open daily 9 am-7:30 pm in summer, Tuesday-Sunday 9 am-7:30 pm in winter. The indoor food market is open Monday-Saturday 7 am-2 pm year-round.

## **Mercato Nuovo**

Loggia Mercato Nuovo (north of Ponte Vecchio)  
Florence, Italy

Also called the Mercato del Porcellino, after the bronze boar statue—rub his snout and you'll be sure to return to Florence. Look for intricate handmade embroidery and lace, many straw articles and Florentine wood carvings, together with good-quality leather goods at reasonable prices.

Tuesday-Sunday 9 am-7:30 pm, till 8 pm in summer.

## **Specialty Stores**

### **Bartolucci**

Via Condotta 12/R  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-211-773

<http://www.bartolucci.com>

The Bartolucci family has been handcrafting wooden toys since 1981, with their inspiration starting from the carving of a wooden Pinocchio puppet. Their business actually began in the 1930s with the manufacture of accordions. The shop produces small toys, pencil holders, clocks, Pinocchio dolls and more, all carved from pine wood and painted by hand.

Daily 9 am-7:30 pm.

### **Bojola**

Via dei Rondinelli 25-R (at the top of Via Tornabuoni, just a few minutes south of the Santa Maria Novella train station)

Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-211-155

<http://www.bojola.it>

Chic, high-quality leather goods produced by an established Florentine company.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-7:30 pm.

### **Borsalino**

Via Porta Rossa 40/R  
Florence, Italy



**Phone:** 055-280-671

<http://www.borsalino.it>

The Ferrari of hats, most famous for men's hats of all types. In the summer, a light straw version is a classy alternative to a baseball cap.

Monday-Saturday 9:30 am-7:30 pm.

### **Bottigliera Bussotti**

Via San Gallo 161/R  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-483-091

<http://www.enotecabussotti.it>

In operation since 1937, this *enoteca* sells domestic and imported wines, along with a variety of Tuscan culinary specialties such as truffle sauces and locally produced olive oil. Shipping services are available.

Monday-Saturday 8:30 am-1 pm and 4-7:30 pm. Hours change in July and August, so check ahead during those months.

### **Casa dei Tessuti**

Via dei Pecori 20-24/R  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-215-961

<http://www.casadeitessuti.com>

An old-fashioned shop and museum run by the Romoli family and founded in 1929 by Egisto Romoli. Precious fabrics are exhibited from the Renaissance and other periods, and twice a week they run a school for Italian and foreign designers where they can learn about textiles and the art of drapery. You can even order a fully custom-made shirt or jacket for a one-of-a-kind souvenir.

Monday 9 am-1 pm; Tuesday-Saturday 9 am-1 pm and 3-7 pm.

### **Dolcissima Firenze**

Via Maggio 61-R  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-239-6268

<http://www.dolcissimafirenze.it>

This tiny shop on the Oltrarno side sells delectable handmade chocolates, truffles and delicious tiny pastries. Novelty chocolates are decorated according to the season—for example, there are lavishly decorated eggs at Easter.

Tuesday-Saturday 7:45 am-8 pm.

### **Enoteca Alessi**

Via delle Oche 27-31/R  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-214-966



<http://www.enotecalessi.com>

A great selection of Tuscan and other wines, along with *vin santo* and grappa. There is a tasting room, and shipping services are available.

Monday-Saturday 9 am-7:30 pm, tasting room from 11:30 am.

### **Enoteca Per Bacco**

Via Borgo Santissimi Apostoli 21-23/R  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-292-646

<http://www.perbaccofirenze.it>

This Florentine wine shop carries a large selection of top-flight Tuscan and other domestic wines, along with imports, champagne and *spumanti*. Shipping services available.

Daily 10:30 am-8 pm.

### **Farmacia di Santa Maria Novella**

Via della Scala 16  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-216-276

<http://www.smnovella.it>

A shopping adventure where you can explore a whole range of soaps, perfumes and herbal cures in what looks like a medieval apothecary. It's in a beautiful 400-year-old building that alone is worth the visit.

Daily 9 am-8 pm.

### **Fiori del Tempo**

Via dei Ginori 27-R  
Florence, Italy

Walking into this workshop, about the size of an elevator, is like stepping into a jewelry box crammed with gorgeous confections of precious and semi-precious stones, pearls, gold and silver. The pieces are uniquely created by Francesco Deidda, and are reasonably priced. There is a second location at Via del Corso 31/R.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-7:30 pm.

### **Il Papiro**

Piazza Duomo 24-R  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-281-628

<http://www.ilpapirofirenze.it>

This company's exquisite handmade, marbled Florentine paper and other stationery make wonderful presents. Additional locations throughout the city, including a stall at the San Lorenzo market.



## Le Sorelle

Via Borgo San Jacopo 30  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-216-223

<http://www.lesorelle.toscana.it>

Near the Ponte Vecchio, this family-run shop overlooks the Arno river and features beautiful block-printed linens and napkins, handmade soaps and other gift items.

Daily 9:30 am-7:30 pm.

## Loretta Caponi

Piazza Antinori 4-R  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-211-074

<http://www.lorettacaponi.com>

This shop is an icon of Florentine taste. It carries exquisite lace, embroidered clothing, children's clothing and household linens. Pricy but unparalleled in quality. A second shop is at Via delle Belle Donne 28/R, Florence. Phone 055-211-074

## Officine Panerai

Piazza San Giovanni 14-R (near the Church of San Giovanni Battista, next to the Duomo)  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-215-795

<http://www.panerai.com>

Collectors across the world seek out this shop's legendary luxury watches (3,000 euros-25,000 euros), which were first produced—in limited quantities—for the Italian Navy during World War II.

Monday 4-7 pm, Tuesday-Saturday 10 am-7 pm, Sunday 3-7 pm.

## Otto D'Ame

Via della Spada 19-R  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-265-4100

<http://www.ottodame.it>

Young, hip, unique street fashion. Beautiful clothing that you don't see anywhere else—beautiful fabrics such as linens, cotton, silks, done up in more casual styles.

Daily 9:30 am-7:30 pm.

## Papini Pelletterie

Lungarno Archibusieri 10-12/R  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-287-879

<http://www.papinileather.com>



Founded in the late 19th century, this shop sells leather suitcases, bags and purses, some with map prints and all of them quite elaborate.

Monday noon-6:30 pm, Tuesday-Saturday 9:30 am-6 pm.

## Scuola del Cuoio

Piazza di Santa Croce 16 (to access the workshop walk through the church of Santa Croce)  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-244-533

<http://www.scuoladelcuoio.com/index.php>

This leather school began as a collaboration between the monks of Santa Croce and the Gori leather-making family after World War II with the goal of providing a sustainable trade for young people. The main attraction is the opportunity to see craftspeople as they work inside the monastery, and the shop sells leather accessories as well as a limited selection of leather apparel. Artisans are in the shop Monday-Friday 10 am-5:30 pm.

Fall and winter Monday-Friday 10 am-6 pm, Saturday 10:30 am-6 pm. Spring and summer daily 10 am-6 pm.

## Dining

### Dining Overview

Florentines, like people of other regions of Italy, are very proud of their cuisine. "Italian cooking" as such does not exist—Florentine, Roman and Milanese cuisines do. In Florence, you might say that the cuisine mirrors the character of the city's inhabitants: no-frills, solid and dignified.

*Bistecca alla fiorentina* is a traditional thick, high-quality, grilled T-bone steak served very rare. But steak was not a large part of the diet of the people whose culinary arts made Florentine cooking what it is today. The staple fare was stick-to-the-ribs, vegetable-based soups served with a drizzle of olive oil on top. Among the soups, two traditional Florentine favorites are *pappa al pomodoro* (tomato, basil and bread soup) and *ribollita* (bean and vegetable soup with bread).

Porcini mushrooms, a real delicacy, are a staple in *risotto ai funghi porcini* (risotto with porcini mushrooms), *tagliatelle ai funghi porcini* (egg pasta with porcini sauce) and *porcini alla griglia* (grilled porcini caps). And it would be a disservice not to elaborate on haricot beans when talking about Tuscan food. Classic preparations include cooking with fresh sage and tomato (*fagioli all'uccelletto*) or with sausage (*fagioli e salsiccia*). The prosaic sound of these dishes belies their irresistible flavor.

Tuscany is undeniably one of the greatest wine-producing regions in the world. Chianti is the most ubiquitous, although quality can vary. Deviation from Chianti's traditional recipe guidelines has given rise to a new regionally specific classification called "Super Tuscan" you should try. In addition to sampling the Chianti, you should not leave without tasting the exquisite and expensive Brunello di Montalcino or the more moderately priced, but very good, Vino Nobile di Montepulciano.

Navigating the seas of Florentine dining spots—from the inexpensive *fiaschetteria* to the pricey *enoteca*, from the *ristorante* to the trattoria and pizzeria—can be as bewildering as it is exhilarating. Once upon a time, the trattoria was an everyday establishment offering simple, hearty fare. Nowadays, because the





charm of these places has acquired a price tag, a meal in a well-known trattoria may be just as elegant and expensive as one in a *ristorante*.

Pizzerias frequently offer a whole gamut of choices, from steak to fish, but it's worth remembering that the pizzeria's specialty is pizza—usually cooked in a wood-burning oven. In Florence, pizza is baked in large rectangular baking sheets, and you decide the size of your slice. Price is by weight.

The *fiaschetteria* and *enoteca* are specialized wine shops that frequently serve light meals, including sandwiches made with *porchetta* (roast pork), soup and crostini. If you'd like to try a takeout specialty and are not too squeamish, try a *lampredotto* or tripe sandwich from one of the tripe stands (*trippaic*) in the markets of San Lorenzo, San Ambrogio or Il Porcellino.

The trend for people who work in the city to have lunch near their workplace rather than at home has meant a surge in inexpensive lunch places. Paradoxically, the same restaurant may offer the identical menu for dinner that it does for lunch, but at double the price. Also, in order to be competitive at lunchtime, elegant cafes will provide a splendid buffet lunch for the same price as their scruffier counterparts.

Italians don't usually bother with breakfast (apart from a cappuccino and maybe a pastry). However, some of the hipper bars and restaurants now offer what they call an English or American breakfast or even an American-style Sunday brunch.

Most restaurants open for lunch noon-2:30 pm, with the rush 1-2 pm. Dinner hours begin at 7 pm at the very earliest (more typically at 7:30 pm) and continue until at least 10 pm; many places stay open until midnight. Florentines dine punctually at 8:30 pm, so if you want to enjoy your meal at a quieter time or avoid lines, plan to dine a bit earlier.

Here is a sampling of restaurants in town. Expect to pay the following for dinner for one, excluding drinks and tip: \$ = less than 20 euros; \$\$ = 20 euros-35 euros; \$\$\$ = 36 euros-65 euros; \$\$\$\$ = more than 65 euros.

## Local & Regional

### Cantinetta Antinori

Piazza degli Antinori 3-R (near Stazione Santa Maria Novella)  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-292-234

<http://www.cantinetta-antinori.com/en/firenze/cantinetta-antinori-di-firenze>

Wine bar and restaurant managed by the Antinori family, which has been producing wines since 1385. Savor locally produced wine, olive oil and goat cheese, along with other Tuscan dishes, in the small but elegant restaurant.

Monday-Saturday noon-10:30 pm. Reservations recommended. \$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

### Cantinetta dei Verrazzano

Via dei Tavolini 18-R  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-268-590



<http://www.verrazzano.com/en/the-place>

This elegant *enoteca* was created by the family that owns Castello da Verrazzano, a well-known Chianti producer. The atmosphere is warm and charming—terra-cotta floors, marble counters and dark wood furnishings. The location—a stone's throw from Palazzo Vecchio and the Duomo—couldn't be better. Make a light lunch or dinner out of a good wine and warm focaccia baked on the premises with thyme and pecorino (sheep's-milk cheese) or porcini mushrooms.

Monday-Saturday 8 am-4:30 pm. \$-\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

### **Terrazza 45**

Mino da Fiesole 45  
Fiesole, Italy

Swanky, wine-bar-style dining with a thoughtful gourmet menu, solid wine selection and a great view. Inventive starters and first courses, as well as more traditional meat- and fish-based main dishes. The menu features several specialties made with truffles, pork cheek, tempura *baccula* and homemade mayonnaise, modern Tuscan souffles and house-made desserts.

### **Club Culinario Toscano da Osvaldo**

Piazza dei Peruzzi 3-R  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-217-919

<http://clubosvaldo.com>

The supper club is a great splurge; the owner, Osvaldo, does all the cooking. The menu changes monthly. Wine lovers will appreciate the list of Super Tuscans: Your server will help with choosing one that will go with your meal. Call for reservations; the place is small and popular amongst locals. It's not easy to find, so allow some extra time to get there.

Daily for dinner. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$\$.

### **Coco Lezzone**

Via del Parioncino 26-R (near the Duomo)  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-287-178

<http://www.cocolezzone.it>

You can eat typical Florentine fare at communal tables in this well-hidden restaurant whose name comes from a dialect phrase meaning "dirty cook." Florentines say the food reminds them of Grandma's home cooking.

Monday-Saturday noon-2:30 pm and 7-10:30 pm. \$\$\$\$. No credit cards.

### **Eataly**

Via Martelli 22  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-015-3601

<http://www.firenze.eataly.it>



This marketplace, restaurant and food experience all in one is part of the slow food movement. It features small-production vendors selling artisanal food products, courses in food and tastings, and other events such as a fruit and vegetable sculpture show. There are small food stations spread across the first and second levels offering food and wine from all producing regions of Italy—including a seafood station, pasta station, meat station, artisanal gelato stand, and a coffee and espresso station featuring regional pastries and desserts.

Daily 9 am-10:30 pm. \$-\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

### **Enoteca Pinchiorri**

Via Ghibellina 87 (near Piazza Santa Croce)  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-242-757 or 055-242-757

<http://www.enotecapinchiorri.it>

Considered by some to be the best restaurant in Florence and one of the best in Italy. (The prices reflect this: You can spend more than 1,000 euros for a meal if you choose the best wines.) It is part of the Relais & Chateaux chain, and some claim it is now trading on its name to attract foreigners. The food can be overworked, but no one disputes that its wine cellar is still first-class. Choose from Tuscan specialties or more international offerings.

Tuesday-Saturday for dinner, sometimes open for lunch. Reservations required. \$\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

### **Enoteca Pitti Gola e Cantina**

Piazza Pitti 16 (in the Oltrarno, across the street from Palazzo Pitti)  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-212-704

<http://pittigolaecantina.com>

This charming little *enoteca* offers an excellent selection of fine Chianti reserves, with delicious Tuscan snacks to go with your choice of wine. The restaurant buys its pork from one of Tuscany's most famous meat slayers and man of letters—Dario Cecchini, the so-called "poet butcher" of Chianti. Chef Marzia Sassetti prepares the pasta dough daily and uses only the freshest local ingredients to create classic Tuscan dishes such as braised meats, soups and pastas.

Daily 1 pm-midnight. \$-\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

### **Harry's Bar**

Lungarno A. Vespucci 22-R (along the river)  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-239-6700

<http://www.harrysbarfirenze.com>

Although the original bar and restaurant is in Venice, Harry's Bar Firenze is considered an elegant second location and is frequented by a dwindling crowd of nostalgics. You'll find classic food there—try the curried chicken breasts or the Milanese-style cutlets.



Daily for lunch and dinner until midnight; closes 3-7 pm. Reservations required. \$\$\$\$ . Most major credit cards.

## Il Latini

Via dei Palchetti 6-R (near Piazza Goldoni)  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-210-916

<http://www.illatini.com>

Even though the place is usually packed with tourists, it's still a favorite of Florentine residents and offers communal-style dining at its best. Tuscan meats, especially *bistecca alla fiorentina*, are the specialty, and no one makes *pappa al pomodoro* better. Don't miss the antipasti. Lines can be long.

Tuesday-Sunday 12:30-10:30 pm. Reservations recommended. \$\$ . Most major credit cards.

## Il Santo Bevitore

Via Santo Spirito 64-R  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-211-264

<http://www.ilsantobevitore.com>

A very serious-looking wine bar that doubles as a restaurant with inventive dishes. The great wine cellar includes reasonably priced, good wines.

Monday-Saturday for lunch and dinner, Sunday for lunch only. \$\$ . Visa and MasterCard accepted.

## La Bussola

Via Porta Rossa 58-R  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-293-376

<http://www.labussolafirenze.it>

Great neighborhood trattoria, not far from the Piazza Repubblica, the name of which means "the compass." Excellent grilled stuffed squid, tuna and other fish dishes, as well as grilled meats. Up front is a more casual section serving delicious wood-fired oven pizzas.

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

## La Casalinga

Via dei Michelozzi 9-R (on the Piazza Santo Spirito, two minutes from Palazzo Pitti)  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-218-624

<http://www.trattorialacasalinga.it>

This is one of the best values in the city for a sit-down, well-prepared meal. It has become very popular among locals and tourists alike as a lunch destination—get there before 1 pm and there may be no line. Evenings are less crowded. The lasagna will make your mouth water, and save room for some dessert sorbet.



Monday-Saturday for lunch and dinner. Closed for three weeks in August and the week of Christmas. Reservations recommended. Most major credit cards.

### La Grotta Guelfa

Via Pellicceria 5-R  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-210-042

<http://www.grottaguelfa.it>

Charming restaurant tucked away in a small square not far from the Piazza Repubblica, this place is always teeming with locals. It specializes in *bistecca*, *ossobuco*, grilled meats, pastas and soups, all with exceptionally fresh, high-quality ingredients. Good service as well, and a nice roomy outdoor terrace.

Daily noon-10:30 pm. Reservations recommended. \$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

### La Reggia degli Etruschi

Via San Francesco 18  
Fiesole, Italy

The menu at this tried-and-true eatery is based on Tuscan classics with a modern twist. (Fun fact: The owner was a former chef for the Florentine soccer club and is a former soccer player.) House specialties include the carpaccio of local heritage *cinta senese*, beef filet wrapped in cured *lardo* and smothered in a grape sauce. Most meat on the menu comes from the owner's butcher shop.

### Lo Strettoio

Via di Serpiolle 7  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-425-0227

<http://www.lostrettoio-tuscanrestaurant.com>

This Tuscan restaurant is in a restored olive-oil processing center built in the 16th century. The press is the centerpiece of the dining room. Located a short drive from the city center, it has stunningly beautiful views of Florence from the terrace. There is an excellent wine selection and a *grapperia* with more than 200 varieties of grappa.

Thursday-Saturday 7-10 pm, Sunday noon-2:30 pm. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

### Osteria Cipolla Rossa

Via dei Conti 53-R  
Florence, Italy

This attractive restaurant, tucked away on a side street near the Medici Chapel, is about locally sourced meat and vegetables combined in some not-so-traditional ways. The namesake red onions appear vinegar-macerated atop a perfectly grilled pork chop, creating a fabulous contrast with the richness of the pork. The pastas are equally interesting.

Wednesday-Monday for lunch and dinner. \$\$-\$\$\$\$. Visa and MasterCard accepted.



## Osteria del Cinghiale Bianco

Borgo San Jacopo 43-R  
Florence, Italy

This place in the Oltrarno, close to Ponte Vecchio, is always packed in the evenings, with good reason. Its excellent Tuscan cuisine is complemented by an intimate yet unpretentious atmosphere—stone walls from the 14th century illuminated by candlelight. Don't miss the *strozzapreti* (literally, "priest chokers"), light and delicate spinach dumplings. For the adventurous, we recommend homemade egg noodles (*pappardelle*) in wild boar sauce (the *cinghiale* of the restaurant's name). Desserts are all homemade, including the mascarpone cream served with a buttery biscuit.

Monday-Friday for dinner, Saturday and Sunday for lunch and dinner. Reservations required. \$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

## Osteria di Giovanni

Via del Moro 22  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-284-897

<http://www.osteriadigiovanni.com>

This restaurant near the Arno is a Buon Ricordo Ristorante. That means they'll send you home with a commemorative Buon Ricordo plate for the signature dish, squab stuffed with fennel sausage and kale (*Piccione del Valdarno*). It's very good, as is the tortelli stuffed with pear and pecorino cheese with leeks and sweet paprika.

Monday-Friday for dinner, Saturday and Sunday for lunch and dinner. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$.

## Relais le Jardin

Piazza Massimo D'Azeglio 3 (in the Regency Hotel)  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-245-247

<http://www.regency-hotel.com/restaurant>

The atmosphere at this charming place is both refined and intimate, thanks to two small, attractive dining rooms—one overlooking the garden. Service is excellent, and most importantly, the food is of the highest quality. The Tuscan and Italian menu changes every two weeks to accommodate seasonal variations in ingredients. House-made pasta and desserts are a constant, as is the excellent selection of wines.

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

## Sostanza-Troia Dal 1869

Via della Porcellana 25-R (a few blocks south of Stazione Santa Maria Novella)  
Florence, Italy

This tiny trattoria is known as "Il Troia" (the trough) because of its long, wooden communal tables. It has a long history, as you might guess from the faded photos of prominent guests that cover the walls. Nothing could be less pretentious than the atmosphere and the country-style home cooking. Try the vegetable soup (*zuppa alla paesana*), the homemade tortellini and the boiled meats. This trattoria attracts an



international clientele. The first dinner seating is popular with tourists, but for a more authentic experience book the second seating, which is popular with locals.

Monday-Friday for lunch and dinner; closed 2-7:30 pm. Closed during the month of August. Also open Saturday for lunch and dinner in April, May, September and October. Reservations highly recommended for dinner. \$\$-\$\$\$\$. No credit cards.

### **Taverna del Bronzino**

Via delle Ruote 27/R  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-495-220

<http://www.tavernadelbronzino.com>

Taverna del Bronzino is an elegant, understated restaurant in the San Marco area. It was the art studio of the painter Bronzino's student, Santo di Tito, in the 16th century. The outstanding cuisine varies between Florentine and international and is considered unequalled for fish dishes. Attentive service, beautiful presentation and a great choice of wines add to the experience.

Monday-Friday for lunch and dinner, Saturday for lunch only. Reservations recommended. Business dress. \$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

### **Trattoria Angiolino**

Via Trento 739  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-873-9438

<http://www.trattoriaangiolino.it>

The friendly staff and reliably delicious food make this old-style trattoria an unfailingly pleasant place to dine. Among the pastas, the *penne all'Angiolino* (pasta with tomato, meat and red-wine sauce) is an institution. The kitchen also makes a mouthwatering, massive *bistecca alla fiorentina*. For vegetarians, the dish of fried artichokes and other vegetables is a house specialty.

Tuesday-Saturday for lunch and dinner, Sunday for lunch. Reservations highly recommended for dinner. \$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

### **Trattoria Gabriello**

Via Condotta 54-R  
Florence, Italy

A typical, lovely trattoria, open since 1858, that is very popular among locals. Home-style, Florentine favorites with specials changing daily. The *melanzane alla parmigiana* (eggplant parmesan) is to die for.

Daily for lunch and dinner. \$-\$\$\$. No credit cards.

### **Trattoria Mario**

Via Rosina 2-R (near Stazione Santa Maria Novella)  
Florence, Italy

**Phone:** 055-218-550



<http://trattoria-mario.com>

A favorite among locals and foreigners alike, Mario is as much theater as restaurant. The cooks in the glass-enclosed kitchen, the friendly service and the crowds sitting at communal tables create a festive atmosphere. Its location, in the heart of the colorful San Lorenzo market district, is a plus. Friday is fish day (the grilled salmon is heavenly).

Monday-Saturday 12 pm-3:30 pm, Reservations not accepted. \$-\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

### **Vinandro Fiesole**

Piazza Mino 33  
Fiesole, Italy

Traditional, homestyle trattoria serving simple Italian fare. It offers roasted vegetables, *frittura* (various fried foods), Tuscan chicken-liver crostini, fresh pastas, jugs of house wine, roasted pork and chestnut-flour-based desserts. Affordable, rustic fare in a *vineria* setting.

### **Vini e Vecchi Sappori**

Via dei Magazzini 3-R  
Florence, Italy

This little gem of a trattoria is steps away from the Piazza della Signoria, near the same side as the Gucci Museum. It's a family affair: Tomasso manages the place, his mom cooks and his *babbo* tends the bar. You'll need a reservation, but even if you have one, be prepared to wait, as the locals tend to linger there, savoring the delicious food. Try the tagliatini with duck ragout or the *carciofi ripieni* (stuffed artichokes) and have a glass of the excellent house Chianti.

Thursday-Tuesday for lunch and dinner. Reservations required. No 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 well-polished and accomplished.

**Appointments**—Having an intermediary is essential. Without someone to make the appropriate contacts, you'll find it hard to get much accomplished. Your 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, but expect last-minute changes, and if you're meeting outside of an office, don't expect punctuality.

**Personal Introductions**—Greet others with a handshake and a slight nod. Titles are important: Use any professional titles that are supplied on introduction or, better yet, ask for a list of the participants and their official titles in advance of the meeting. Continue to use the title and last name unless you are instructed otherwise.

**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, and 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. If you want to pay, tip the waiter ahead of time and ask that the bill be quietly given to you. If you do not make such arrangements in advance, you will have to ask for the check; it will not be brought to you automatically.

**Body Language**—Italians typically converse while standing close to one another. They tend to gesture when talking, and handshakes can extend longer than in other cultures. There is an entire system of hand signs that they use all the time, though none are likely to be made inadvertently by a foreigner. More often, visitors to Italy will start to imitate the gestures used by the locals without understanding the precise meanings of the movements—a practice we'd caution against.

**Gift Giving**—Small but high-quality gifts are appropriate in some situations: Ask your intermediary for advice. If you are invited to a home, take flowers or chocolates. Exercise caution in giving wine: Many Italians are experts; if you're not, you may want to 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, as are art, travel and Italian culture. The less positive sides of Italy, including Mussolini, World War II and the Mafia, are probably better avoided.

## Personal Safety

In Florence, as elsewhere, the best safety guideline is to use common sense. Florence is a lively place, and even on weekday evenings—especially during high season—the streets are relatively full until about midnight (much later on weekends).

Although there's no reason to avoid going out at night in the center of town, women traveling alone should take extra precautions. Avoid the Santa Maria Novella train station and the surrounding area at night: Transients congregate there. Do not cross any parks or large grassy squares, such as the Fortezza del Basso, in the dark.

Pickpocketing, unfortunately, is quite common. Pickpockets and purse snatchers often target tourists in crowded places, such as public buses, the train station or even churches. The Cascine street market is notorious. Italians often carry day packs backwards, with the pack in front of them where they can keep an eye on it. This way it is unlikely that a backpack can be slashed with a knife and the contents removed without the holder even being aware of the action behind them, a rather common way to separate tourists from their cameras or other valuables.

Watch out for packs of "gypsy" children who tend to come out of nowhere to create a small scene. While some distract you by harassing you or asking for money, another one of them—or a parent—may be making off with your wallet or purse. Keep a good lookout for people—even children—carrying a wrapped newspaper, a piece of cardboard or a raincoat on their forearm: That's a typical method of concealing the action. And keep your purse or bag tightly closed with single-minded determination.

Men should put wallets in either an inside zippered pocket or a front trouser pocket. (Gripping a wallet tells thieves where the wallet is located and makes things easy for them.)



Another thing to watch out for is purse snatchers on motorbikes: They may grab your purse as they ride by (more common on relatively isolated residential streets). A purse strap slung diagonally across your body, with the purse away from the road, will help you avoid being a target.

When stopping at traffic lights, watch for children cleaning your windshield. They are sometimes used to distract you while others clear the backseat and trunk of your car within seconds.

For the latest information, contact your country's travel-advisory agency. For the police, call toll-free 113; for the fire brigade, call 115.

## Health

Hygienic standards are generally similar to those in other industrialized nations. The water is safe to drink, although most Italians prefer the bottled variety. The water at public fountains on public squares is safe—and a boon in hot weather. Food sold on the streets is usually fine, but trust your instincts. Only buy gelato advertised as made in-house from shops with a high turnover so you are sure that the stock each day is fresh.

Medical facilities are generally very good in Florence. English-speaking medical services are offered at Via Roma 4. Monday-Friday 11 am-noon, 1-3 pm and 5-6 pm, and Saturday 11 am-noon and 1-3 pm. No appointment is necessary. The service also makes house calls 24 hours a day all year. Phone 055-475-411. <http://www.medicalservicefirenze.it>.

The hospital, Misericordia di Firenze on Vicolo degli Adimari 1, also offers medical attention for tourists Monday-Friday 2-6 pm. Phone 055-212-222.

Pharmacies (*farmacias*) are located throughout Florence and are indicated with a red or green neon cross that is lit when the store is open at night. (The door will sometimes be closed; ring the buzzer for service.) Regular hours are Monday-Saturday 9 am-1 pm and 3-7:30 pm, with a few minor variations. Pharmacies open 24 hours are listed on the city-run website [http://www.en.comune.fi.it/quick\\_links/pharmacies.htm](http://www.en.comune.fi.it/quick_links/pharmacies.htm).

Pharmacists in Italy can be of more help for minor ailments than pharmacists in the U.S. For major concerns, call the toll-free medical emergency number: 118.

Visitors to Italy are advised to write down the scientific or generic name of prescription medicines and keep them in a safe place during travel. If medicines are lost or a prescription runs out, making a trip to the pharmacy might be all you need to do to fill it.

During off hours and on Sunday and holidays, at least one pharmacy is open in every neighborhood. These are called *farmacia di turno* and are listed in the newspapers *La Nazione* and *La Repubblica* (in the Florence section). A window outside each pharmacy lists the closest *farmacia di turno*.

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

## Disabled Advisory

In general, Florence—and the rest of Italy—is not an easy place for the disabled because not all structures are equipped with ramps. Sensitivity to this issue is growing, however, and a few of the most important museums (Uffizi, Accademia, Bargello) are accessible, although the historic center is otherwise



not easily navigated. The Santa Maria Novella train station is also fully accessible. All tourist offices offer up-to-date listings.

Some public restrooms are wheelchair-accessible, especially in the larger establishments. There's extensive information about the accessibility of public buildings at [http://en.comune.fi.it/health\\_safety/accessibility.html](http://en.comune.fi.it/health_safety/accessibility.html).

The city has created a website, "Florence Without Barriers," that offers information for the disabled about getting around the city, where to stay, where to eat and other useful services. <http://firenzeturismo.it/en/florence-accessible/florence-without-barriers.html>

## Facts

### Dos & Don'ts

Do wear comfortable shoes, as the pavements in Florence are a nightmare for high heels.

Don't ignore Florence's traffic rules—authorities have made sure that tourists won't escape the hefty fines.

Do visit the *aperitivi* bars of Florence in the early evening. They are the places to be seen at these hours, and most serve free nibbles of food with your drink, which is welcome when you're not used to Italy's later dining hours.

Don't—never, in fact—buy brand-name articles from street vendors, as they are bound to be fake. You may even face hefty fines when caught at the border or an Italian airport with a fake Rolex watch or Gucci bag.

Do enjoy the great view of Florence from the neighboring town of Fiesole or from the panoramic terrace of the Piazzale Michelangelo in the Oltrarno area of Florence, where the views are gorgeous and sweeping, particularly at sunset.

Don't order a cappuccino after a meal, as you will get a blank stare from the waiter. Italians only drink cappuccinos in the morning; after meals, they drink espresso.

Do visit the historic center at 5 am to enjoy an hour of almost tourist-free Florence.

Do learn some very basic Italian words, which are very much appreciated in the shops and restaurants. Say *buongiorno* for "good day" when you are entering a shop, and *buona sera* in the evening (after 3 pm). Say *arrivederla* or *arrivederci* (less formal) for "goodbye." Two other useful phrases are *grazie* (thank you) and *per favore* (please).

## Geostats

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

**Population:** 382,961.

**Languages:** Italian, but English is usually spoken in places most frequented by tourists.



**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. Two- and three-prong round plugs are used.

**Telephone Codes:** 39, country code; 055, city code;

## Money

### Taxes

Italy imposes a value-added tax, known as IVA, on the price of most items, ranging from 4% for essential items (such as food) to 23% for nonessentials (such as leather goods). If you make a large purchase (more than about 155 euros) in a store and plan to take the items out of Italy, it may be possible to receive a refund of the IVA. Participation in this program is left up to the individual stores, so you may have to look around. Stores participating in the program usually have a special sticker or sign in the window, but it's still a good idea to verify participation before making your purchase. The refund can be claimed when you leave the last European Union country through which you are traveling.

Detailed instructions on how to get the VAT refund can be found in English on the Italian government customs and duty website: <http://www.agenziadogane.gov.it/wps/wcm/connect/internet/ee/vtatrefund>. A central phone number for the Customs Agency is 06-5024-6061.

### Tipping

Tipping is not obligatory. All restaurants include a cover charge per person (*pane e coperto*) that ranges from about 1 euro to about 4 euros per person. They sometimes add a 10%-12% service charge (*servizio*) as well. However, if you wish to reward especially good service, you might leave an extra 5%-10%.

In hotels, you might consider leaving the housekeepers 3 euros per day, per person, at the end of your stay. Porters and room-service personnel can be given 5 euros-10 euros. For taxi drivers, it's usually appropriate to tip about 1 euro unless it's an especially large fare.

### Weather

Summers are hot, with July being the hottest month. Temperatures can easily surpass 100 F/38 C, but 89-93 F/32-34 C is more the norm. Spring and fall tend to be mild, but don't be surprised to see the odd 80 F/27 C day even in April. A good time to visit is in late September or October—the sky is clear, the vineyards are in harvest, and the long, hot, muggy summer is over. Rain tends to be infrequent but heavy; it is most common in February and March and in the fall.

Although winter temperatures are not very low, dampness makes the cold penetrating. Winter temperatures can drop to just below freezing at night and warm up to 46-50 F/8-10 C during the day. Snow is rare.



## What to Wear

Italians dress very well and are extremely fashion-conscious. For visitors who want to be taken seriously, neat, casual attire is appropriate for everyday situations.

Italians tend to find tourists who sightsee in beach or sports attire rather amusing. You'll feel more comfortable (and get more attention) shopping in expensive clothing stores or patronizing more refined restaurants if you're dressed well, but if you do any walking in Florence, opt for comfortable shoes.

Show respect for religious places by dressing appropriately. If you're wearing short skirts, sleeveless tops or shorts, you will not be allowed to enter, particularly in churches and cathedrals, where they might ask you to put on a covering or deny you access. Business meetings require a suit and tie for men and equivalent apparel for women.

## Civitavecchia, Italy

### Overview

#### Introduction

Located 43 mi/69 km west of Rome, Civitavecchia, Italy, is one of the most popular destinations for ferry travelers in the Mediterranean.

All major cruise lines begin and end voyages there or stop for shore excursions to see Rome and the Vatican.



#### Port Information

##### Location

The enormous port in Civitavecchia is not very attractive. From the ferries to the port entrance is 0.5 mi/0.8 km; shuttles are available.

The train station is another 10-minute walk. Trains leave for Rome's Termini Station every 20 minutes and take about one hour and 15 minutes. Buses also go to Rome. Trains do not run direct to Fiumicino Airport; travelers must go first to Rome, and transfer trains. Total travel time is at least two hours.

Taxis are not always available.

Private shuttle companies take travelers from Civitavecchia to Rome.



## 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.

**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.

**Especially for Kids**—The Bioparco zoo in Villa Borghese and its Children's Farm; the Explora—Il Museo dei Bambini di Roma children's museum; climbing the dome of Basilica di San Pietro; sticking your hand in La Bocca della Verità (the Mouth of Truth) at Chiesa di Santa Maria in Cosmedin; searching for animals and other hidden pictures on fountains and monuments; indulging in gelato and pizza.

## 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 Verità 18 (between the Circo Massimo and the Tiber)  
Rome, Italy

This basilica is famous for *La Bocca della Verità* (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 Foro 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.mdbr.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 RomanoùCrypta 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  
Bagnaia, Italy

**Phone:** 0761-924-029

<http://www.sacrobosco.it>

Bomarzo village, 7 mi/12 km northeast of Bagnaia, 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.checcino-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. \$\$\$\$ . Most major credit cards.

## 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 Kosher

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 *Il 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?vnextoid=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.



## Kotor, Montenegro

### Overview

#### Introduction

The city of Kotor, Montenegro, is one of the best-preserved medieval towns in the Mediterranean.

Steep cliffs surround the Bay of Kotor, inviting its nickname "Europe's most southern fjord," and the city is still surrounded by its ancient walls. Don't miss the St. Tryphon Cathedral in the old town, built in the 12th century.

Kotor has an interesting motto above the town's entrance: "What belongs to others we don't want, what is ours we will never surrender."



### Port Information

#### Location

Tucked away in the interior of the Bay of Kotor off the Adriatic Sea, Kotor is a convenient stop for cruises leaving from Venice.

## Split, Croatia

### Overview

#### Introduction

The seaport of Split, Croatia, designated by UNESCO as a cultural treasure, lies on the Dalmatia coast 160 mi/260 km south of Zagreb. Its palm-lined oceanfront promenade is reminiscent of the French Riviera, but the rest of the old city reveals a striking combination of Roman, Venetian and Hapsburg influences.



Tourists aren't the only ones who have enjoyed the charms of the city—the Roman emperor Diocletian built a palace in Split in the fourth century, and Prime Minister Joseph Broz Tito maintained a palace in the city.



Art aficionados will not want to miss the two galleries dedicated to Croatia's greatest sculptor, Ivan Mestrovic.

Be sure to spend time just walking around this interesting city. Take a ride up the hill of Marjan for a fabulous view of the city and the sea.

## Port Information

### Location

Small cruise ships dock at the busy port of Split near the heart of the old city. Large ships have to anchor in the bay and tender passengers to the dock. The port serves as a departure point for many ferries leaving for the Croatian islands and Ancona, Italy.

Split's city center is a five- to 10-minute walk from the dock, and the train and bus stations are even closer. Taxis are available at the port.

## See & Do

### Sightseeing

#### Historic Sites

##### Diocletian's Palace

Split, Croatia

<http://www.diocletianspalace.org>

Diocletian's Palace forms the heart of the old town (the ruins are thought to be some of the best-preserved Roman architecture in eastern Europe). Over the centuries, the people of Split have made themselves at home within the walls of the enormous palace—you can have coffee at a cafe next to a huge column from the palace poking up through the center of the building.

Plan to spend at least half a day at the palace; there are more than 220 buildings and numerous attractions on its grounds. In busier months, you will be serenaded by local cappella quartets singing in the courtyards. There is no entry fee, and the grounds are open 24 hours daily. The labyrinthine Cellars, located in the southern half of the palace, are also worth a visit (there's a nominal entrance fee which changes seasonally).

##### Jupiter's Temple

Kraj Sv Ivana  
Split, Croatia

This small rectangular building dates from the third century. It features vaulted ceilings and an ornate frieze that covers the walls.

May-October daily 8 am-7 pm. 5 HRK.



## Museums

### Archaeological Museum

Zrinsko-Frankopanska 25  
Split, Croatia

**Phone:** 0213-29340

<http://www.mdc.hr/split-arheoloski>

This museum has a permanent exhibition of Greek and Roman mosaics and sarcophagi.

Monday-Saturday 9 am-2 pm and 4-8 pm; closed Saturday afternoon October-May. 15 HRK.

### Mestrovic Gallery and Kastelet Gallery

Setaliste Ivana Mestrovica 46  
Split, Croatia

<http://www.mestrovic.hr>

The Mestrovic Gallery, housed in a neoclassical villa, provides a comprehensive look at the artist's work. In contrast, the nearby Kastelet is in a former 16th-century summer house and showcases the artist's religious pieces.

May-September, Tuesday-Sunday 9 am-7 pm; October-April Tuesday-Saturday 9 am-4 pm, Sunday 10 am-3 pm. 30 HRK for both galleries. No credit cards.

## Venice, Italy

### Overview

#### Introduction

Venice, Italy, is romance: a bridge arching over a canal, a gondola gliding by, the moon reflecting off water. Venice is history: the Palazzo Ducale (Doge's Palace), Piazza San Marco, the Grand Canal, great art and great museums. Venice is modern: the headline names and paparazzi of the Venice Film Festival, the buzzing excitement of Carnival in the 10 days before Lent begins.

Venice has a plethora of world-famous museums and artistic treasures. The Basilica di San Marco, with its spectacular Golden Altar; the Bridge of Sighs, where prisoners could enjoy one last glimpse of the beautiful city before entering the dark jail; the Gallerie dell'Accademia, with its collection of art of the 14th-18th centuries; the Peggy Guggenheim Collection of 20th-century art—the list is long. Pick and choose which places you'll visit in-depth, or just skim the surface and soak up the atmosphere.





Venice is set on islands connected by bridges, with the Grand Canal as its main thoroughfare, and traffic moves by boats that range from the traditional gondolas to refuse barges. The absence of automobile noise means you can hear the laughter of children from your window, as well as footsteps seemingly just around the corner. But what makes Venice so unique also challenges its existence. The rising sea levels of global climate change threaten the city, and now, more often than in the past, high tides from the Adriatic Sea can flood whole sections of the city.

Although the resident population in Venice has declined as many young people have moved to the mainland, where real-estate prices and the cost of living are lower, the city continues to draw tourists. In fact, the central areas can be packed, people may be brusque, and prices are high. Even so, Venice remains a treasure to be savored.

## Highlights

**Sights**—Basilica di San Marco; Piazza San Marco; the Grand Canal by boat or gondola; the islands of Burano, Murano and Torcello; the Lido in fair weather.

**Museums**—Gallerie dell'Accademia; Museo Correr; the Peggy Guggenheim Collection; the Doge's Palace; Museo Ebraico; Palazzo Fortuny.

**Memorable Meals**—Ca' d'Oro alla Vedova for *cicheti* and baked mussels; *risotto alla Torcellana* at Locanda Cipriani; *bigoli in salsa* (spaghetti with anchovy and onion sauce, a Venetian specialty) at Trattoria Gatto Nero; fried razor clams at Vini da Gigio.

**Late Night**—Hanging out in Campo Santa Margherita; people-watching at Piccolo Mondo; strolling the Piazza San Marco under a full moon or on a foggy night; an after-dinner drink at Vineria all'Amarone.

**Walks**—Crossing the Rialto Bridge; getting lost in Sestiere di San Marco; wandering down Via Garibaldi.

**Especially for Kids**—Dressing up for Carnival and parading around town; *traghetto* rides; exploring the prisons and armory of the Palazzo Ducale (Doge's Palace).

## Geography

Venice sprawls across hundreds of low-lying islands in a lagoon in the northern crescent of the Adriatic Sea. A single bridge links it to the mainland city of Mestre. Traffic ends at Piazzale Roma, making the city serenely free of buses, cars and motorcycles—even bicycles are prohibited.

The city's main thoroughfare is the Grand Canal. The islands are also crisscrossed by 177 smaller canals and connected by more than 400 pedestrian bridges. Streets are narrow and winding—some little more than sidewalks between buildings. The city is divided into six *sestieri* (districts): Cannaregio, San Polo, San Marco, Dorsoduro, Castello and Santa Croce.

A map of the city resembles a labyrinth, but surprisingly, it is not too difficult to find your way to the main attractions. Yellow signs are posted on the buildings at most major intersections, with arrows directing you to Piazzale Roma, Ferrovia (the train station, Santa Lucia), Rialto Bridge, Accademia Bridge and Piazza San Marco.

Specific addresses, however, can be hard to find, as many streets are so small they aren't on maps. Phone directories usually list addresses by the name of the *sestiere* and the number of the building, with



no reference to a street. Often the easiest way to find a shop or restaurant is to ask—most people are helpful, and many speak English. Hotel employees and shopkeepers are usually quite knowledgeable about their neighborhoods.

Several islands in the lagoon are also part of the city area or connected to the city by regular public boats. In addition to Giudecca (the large island across from the Zattere) and Lido (where you'll find beaches), the best-known are the glassmaking island of Murano, colorful Burano and the lagoon's original seat of power, Torcello. The airport is on the mainland, north of Mestre.

## History

As invaders swept down from the Alps in the fifth century, the farmers and fisherfolk living along what is now Italy's northeastern coast sought refuge on nearby scrub-covered islands. From the safety of their lagoon in the Adriatic, Venetians began building a powerful trading empire. By the ninth century, religious and political power had moved from Torcello to the island of Rivoaltum, where the Venetian leaders began clearing the land and driving wooden piles into the mud beneath the water—laying the foundations of modern Venice.

The city's merchants and traders (including Marco Polo's relatives) amassed huge fortunes, which were invested in the city. The fortunes built grand palaces and huge churches, and funded precious art collections (some of which still adorn the Basilica di San Marco and the Palazzo Ducale).

At its peak in the 1400s, the Repubblica Serenissima (the Most Serene Republic, as it was known) ruled the Adriatic and eastern Mediterranean—its democratic-style government served as an international model for centuries. But the republic soon began to decay, weakened by expansion wars, famines, plagues and finally by invading French troops, led by Napoleon in 1797. French control ended when Venice was ceded to the Hapsburg Empire a few years later. In 1866 it switched hands again, joining the Kingdom of Italy.

Today, Venice is the capital of Italy's Veneto region and one of the country's most visited cities. Its watery setting and tourism-based economy bring modern challenges, such as structural erosion caused by motorboat wakes and a steadily decreasing population as younger generations move to less-expensive cities with more job opportunities. The proud Venetians are not ones to give in easily, though, and as measures are being taken to protect this fragile city, more travelers from around the world will have the opportunity to discover the treasures hidden within it.

## Port Information

### Location

The Venice Cruise Terminal (Terminal Venezia Passeggeri) has two main docking areas, San Basilio pier in the Giudecca Canal and the Stazione Marittima, the largest of the two areas and where the biggest ships dock. Piazzale Roma, the gateway to Venice, is only a 15-minute walk from the Stazione Marittimaterminal. Another option is the Venice People Mover, a cable-operated tram system. During embarking and disembarking hours, a free shuttle bus service runs from the Stazione Marittima to the People Mover. Additionally, the Ailaguna water bus provides transit from the terminal to St. Mark's Square.

San Basilio is just a 15-minute walk from the Gallerie dell'Accademia. It takes more than 30 minutes to walk from the terminal to the Stazione Marittima and is not recommended. Instead, take a water taxi.



Because Stazione Marittima and San Basilio are part of the Terminal Venezia Passeggeri (Venice Cruise Terminal), they have tourist information, duty-free shops, ATM machines, a currency exchange bureau, free Wi-Fi and refreshment facilities. All terminals have water taxis. <http://www.vtp.it>.

Venice Yacht Pier offers five private yacht berths located near the Stazione Marittima, San Basilio and along the St. Mark's Basin.

## Potpourri

A traditional gondola is 36 ft/11 m long and weighs 1,325 lb/600 kg. They are required by law to be painted black.

In the 16th century, an anonymous writer published an escort guide for visitors that listed the names, addresses, looks, skills and costs of the most beautiful courtesans in Venice. In 1509, about 11,500 working girls are said to have offered their services in Venice, which had a population of 170,000 at the time.

*Amaretti* (dome-shaped cookies) were first made in Venice during the Renaissance period.

St. Mark is the patron saint of Venice. His symbol of a winged lion holding a book can be seen on many of the older buildings. If the book is open, Venice was at peace when the building was erected; if closed, Venice was at war.

Casanova made the city synonymous with lovers. Once imprisoned in the Doge's Palace, he escaped by fleeing across the rooftops.

City-son Marco Polo is attributed with introducing both pasta and window blinds to Italy from the Far East.

The still-standing "Bridge of the Tits" in San Polo was named after the working girls who displayed themselves on the bridge and in the windows of the nearby houses in a "tempting state of undress" while the light from oil lamps illuminated the spectacle.

In 2010, Giorgia Boscolo became Venice's first female gondolier. It's a lucrative business. In high season, a gondolier can make 5,000 euros a month or more (depending on his singing skills).

Glass production has a 700-year-old tradition in Venice and was once regarded as a state secret. Revealing the secret could have meant the death penalty for the "traitor."

## See & Do

### Sightseeing

The best introduction to Venice is a boat ride on the Grand Canal, and it doesn't really matter whether the vessel is a velvet-cushioned gondola or a utilitarian vaporetto (public water-bus). The S-shaped canal slices the city in half: Lining each side is an astonishing collection of 12th- to 18th-century buildings. Some of the baroque palaces look as elegant as they did when the doges ruled the city, though other architectural gems are crumbling into the murky water.

As you travel along Venice's Grand Canal, you'll also see what life is like in a city without automobiles. Cargo barges ply the narrow waterway along with police- and fireboats. Classic wooden cabin cruisers





take tourists to luxury hotels, and skilled gondoliers navigate their sleek black vessels under bridges and around bends. Venice's canals are a visual parade.

Once you have oriented yourself to the waterways, set out on foot. Pick up a map, but expect to get lost—it's an inevitable part of the experience. Streets meander across canals, through *campi* (squares) and around buildings—often changing names as well as direction. If that isn't confusing enough, some streets are flooded in the winter because of *aqua alta*—high water.

You'll want to spend most of a day visiting the sites close to the Piazza San Marco. The Doge's Palace offers a fascinating look at how the city's leaders lived and managed the republic, and the colorful religious mosaics at the Basilica di San Marco are some of the most stunning in the world. Take in the view from the top of the Campanile di San Marco if it's a sunny day. From the piazza, it's an easy walk to the Rialto Bridge, where you can browse the shops and enjoy views of the Grand Canal.

Across the Grand Canal from San Marco, via the timber Accademia Bridge, is the Dorsoduro neighborhood, where you'll find two very different museums. The Gallerie dell'Accademia is the city's signature art repository, containing the best works of the prolific Italian Renaissance painters. A few blocks away (but worlds apart) is the Guggenheim Collection, a canal-front palazzo that was fashioned into a modern and avant-garde art gallery by an American heiress.

There's a host of other spots to visit—from the Jewish Ghetto and the city's many ornate churches to the islands of Murano and Burano. A moonlit walk along a canal or an early-morning stroll through the winding streets of a secluded residential area can prove just as illuminating as a tour of the city's major attractions.

*Note:* Venice offers several multipurpose tourist cards, each with unique features. For museums, the Venice Card and the museum passes are the primary options, providing discounts and allowing visitors to skip ticketing lines. The Venice Card provides discounts on most museums, churches, historic sites, performing arts events and more, and can be purchased at all Hello Venezia offices and most APT tourist offices. It remains active for seven days after initial use and costs 39.90 euros adults. Notably, it does not provide discounts on public transportation. <http://www.venicecard.com>.

Alternatively, there are several types of museum passes, such as the Museum Pass and the MUVE Friend Card, that offer entrance to multiple museums for one discounted price. Museum Passes can be purchased at all participating museums or online. <http://www.visitmuve.it>.

Visitors can also take advantage of the Chorus Pass, a card that gives a single user unlimited entrance to most Venice churches for a period of up to one year. (Visit the website for a complete list of churches.) It's definitely worth the price just to visit the Basilica di San Marco several times. Offered by the Venice Church Association, the card costs 12 euros. A Chorus Pass Family (for two adults and children younger than 18) offers the same plan as the Chorus Pass and is available for 24 euros. Chorus Associazione per le Chiese del Patriarcato di Venezia, San Polo 2986, Venice. Phone 041-275-0462. <http://www.chorusvenezia.org>.



## Historic Sites

### Basilica di San Marco

San Marco 328  
Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-270-8311

<http://www.basilicasanmarco.it>

San Marco's Basilica embodies Venice's historical role as a bridge between East and West. Its five cupolas laid out in a cross pattern are strikingly Byzantine, though details both inside and out reflect the Romanesque and Renaissance periods. Under the overlay of mosaics, patterns of colorful marble and innumerable carvings, the main architectural influences are Gothic. Have a look at the 13th-century carvings on the central doorways, representing the Labors of the Month. Don't wait for your neck to start aching before you pass up the exterior mosaics and move to the gold-lined interior of the basilica. You'll find this structure filled with artistic decorations that were used to awe the public with the might of the church, as well as teach the stories of the Bible and saints. The mosaics of the Central Dome of the Ascension and the Dome of the Pentecost are particularly stunning.

Among the treasures within the basilica are more than 500 columns adorned with sculptures, puzzle-work floors made from Egyptian marble, walls covered with allegorical mosaics, Gothic arches and extravagant bronze lamps. Behind the altar is the Pala d'Oro, a screen of precious stones, gold and enamel objects dating from 976. The Tesoro (treasury) contains items stolen from Constantinople in 1204, including several gem-studded gold and silver caskets. Also located at St. Mark's Museum are tapestries, paintings and the original bronze horses that adorned the church's facade. They were trophies from the Fourth Crusade (the ones over the portal on the Loggia dei Cavalli are copies).

Avoid the crowds by visiting early in the morning or in the evening, although the mosaics will only reveal their full splendor when the church is fully illuminated (approximately Monday-Friday 11:30 am-12:30 pm, Saturday 11:30 am-4 pm, Sunday 2-4 pm). Dress modestly; knees and shoulders should be covered. All large bags must be checked upon entry.

Monday-Saturday 9:45 am-5 pm, Sunday 2-4 pm. Entrance to the Basilica is free. Reserve timed tickets ahead of your visit online (and avoid the queue) for 2 euros.

### Basilica di Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari

Campo dei Frari, San Polo  
Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-272-8611

<http://www.basilicadeifrari.it>

Completed in 1443, this large and lofty Gothic brick cathedral, generally referred to as the "Frari" (for the friars who once lived there), is one of the city's most important sites. It has the second-highest bell tower in Venice. Art-lovers make a beeline to the high altar with Titian's revolutionary *Assumption of the Virgin* (1518) with the Madonna clad in a flaming red robe, and there are works by Giovanni Bellini, Antonio Rizzo and Donatello as well. The richness of the paintings and sculptures is outstanding, and the works stand in contrast to the simplicity of the interior. Check out the Monk's Choir, which has three-tiered stalls from 1468 carved with puzzle-work bas-reliefs of saints and Venetian city scenes. The church also houses the tombs of the sculptor Canova, the composer Monteverdi and two doges. Frari is part of the Chorus Pass circuit.



Open Monday-Saturday 9 am-6 pm, Sunday 1-6 pm. 3 euros.

### **Basilica Santa Maria della Salute**

Seminario Patriarcale di Venezia Dorsoduro 1

Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-241-1018

<http://www.seminariovenezia.it/informazioni>

Venetians built the Basilica of Our Lady of Good Health to show their gratitude to the Virgin Mary for delivering them from a terrible plague—it's hard to miss this massive marble church situated at the end of the Grand Canal. The architect Baldassare Longhena dedicated his life to this building, which was completed in 1687 and is the heaviest structure in Venice. On the high altar, you'll see a gorgeous Byzantine icon dedicated to the Virgin. On a minor altar, there's a large painting by Titian, *The Pentecost*. More of Titian's works can be seen on the ceiling of the sacristy, where you'll also find the work of Jacopo Tintoretto. Every 21 November, for the Feast of the Presentation of the Virgin, people flock to the church, crossing the Grand Canal on a pontoon bridge from Campo Santa Maria del Giglio.

Daily 9 am-noon and 3-5:30 pm. Church admission is free; 3 euros to enter the sacristy.

### **Campanile di San Marco**

Piazza San Marco

Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-270-8311

<http://www.basilicasanmarco.it>

St. Mark's bell tower, the tallest (322 ft/98 m) structure on the piazza, offers magnificent views of the city on a clear day. The present tower was built in 1912, replacing the original that was begun in the ninth century and completed in the 16th century—it tumbled to the ground in 1902. Access to the viewing platform is by an internal lift installed in 1962.

Daily 9 am-7 pm April-June and October, 9 am-9 pm July-September, 9:30 am-3:45 pm November-March. 8 euros.

### **Chiesa dei Santi Giovanni e Paolo**

Campo dei Santi Giovanni e Paolo, Castello

Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-523-5913

<http://www.basilicasantigiovanniepaolo.it>

Dedicated to Saints John and Paul, this cavernous Gothic church (more familiarly known as San Zanipolo) is one of the largest in Venice. It's often called "the Pantheon of Venice" because of the 25 doges' tombs within. An important stop on the art-history circuit, it houses paintings including Giovanni Bellini's *The Politico di San Vincenzo Ferreri* and three by Paolo Veronese. The *Monument to Doge Pasquale Mocenigo* (1481) is a masterpiece by sculptor Pietro Lombardo celebrating the doge's military pursuits.

In the square out front stands Andrea Verrocchio's monument to Bartolomeo Colleoni. This famous *condottiere* (commander of the mercenaries) requested a statue in San Marco as his battle payment. The



clever doge agreed, but instead of putting the figure on the piazza, he had it placed in front of the Scuola di San Marco (the San Marco School).

Monday-Saturday 9 am-6 pm, Sunday noon-6 pm. 3.50 euros.

### **Chiesa della Madonna dell'Orto**

Opera Madonna dell'Orto Cannaregio 3512  
Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-719-933

<http://www.madonnadellorto.org>

This church was originally dedicated to St. Christopher, patron saint of ferrymen, merchants and travelers, and his statue still stands over the main door. It's an elegantly spare brick Gothic church now dedicated to the Madonna of the Garden and with a campanile crowned by an onion-shaped cupola. Tintoretto lived just around the corner. His tomb (in a chapel to the right of the chancel) is marked by a plaque. He graced the church with a terrifying *Last Judgment* that is on the right wall; note the classical figure of Charon ferrying the souls of the dead. In the painting *The Adoration of the Golden Calf* on the left wall, the figure carrying the calf, fourth from the left, is said to represent Tintoretto himself.

Monday-Friday 10 am-5 pm. 2.50 euros adults.

### **Chiesa di San Sebastiano**

Campo San Sebastiano, Dorsoduro 1686  
Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-275-0462

<http://www.chorusvenezia.org/chiesa-di-san-sebastiano>

The architecture of the church, built in the early 16th century, is less interesting than the art treasures it shelters, notably three cycles of vivid and colorful paintings by Paolo Veronese (1528-88) illustrating the victory of faith over heresy. Of particular note are the magnificent frescoes (1555-56) which decorate the coffered ceiling of the sacristy and depict episodes from the Book of Esther. The frescoes on the upper part of the nave show fathers of the church, prophets, and civil and biblical figures, whereas the enormous canvases on the side walls of the chancel illustrate episodes from the life of St. Sebastian. The organ shutters and frontal depict the presentation of Jesus in the temple and the nativity. They date from 1558 to 1559, and all of the frescoes were restored in 2015. Veronese is buried to the left of the presbytery.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-5 pm. 3 euros.

### **Chiesa di Santa Maria dei Miracoli**

Campo dei Miracoli, Cannaregio  
Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-275-0462

<http://www.chorusvenezia.org/en/church-of-santa-maria-dei-miracoli>

This colorful little marble church is tucked away in a picturesque square near the Chiesa dei Santi Giovanni e Paolo. Built in 1481-89 by Pietro Lombardo, Miracoli houses Nicolo di Pietro's *Virgin and Child*—a painting believed to have miraculous powers. A favorite among Venetians, Miracoli brings the



magnificence of a cathedral down to a more human scale and, with its decorative, geometric patterns of colored marble, is a notable example of the Venetian early-Renaissance style.

Open Monday-Saturday 10 am-5 pm. 3 euros.

## Palazzo Ducale

San Marco 1  
Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-271-5911

<http://palazzoducale.visitmuve.it>

The Doge's Palace served as the seat of the government of the Repubblica Serenissima, the Palace of Justice and the residence of the doge. The original palace was built in the ninth century; several fires made a complete reconstruction necessary in the 14th century. The Venetian use of geometric designs across the facade arrests the eye, and the use of arches along the bottom of the building creates a lacelike effect. Its main gate, the Porta della Carta, is the picture of Venetian Gothic architecture. Another masterpiece is the 15th-century marble Scala dei Giganti (Giants' Stairs), designed by Renaissance architect Antonio Rizzo. It was used for ceremonial purposes, including the crowning of the doges. Many rooms are decorated with paintings by Jacopo Tintoretto, Paolo Veronese, Giovanni Tiepolo and Titian. One wall of the main salon (Sala del Maggior Consiglio) is entirely covered with Tintoretto's enormous *Paradiso*, one of the largest paintings in the world. A frieze around the upper walls of the room shows the first 76 doges of Venice, with the exception of the decapitated traitor Marin Falier (whose spot is marked by a black flag). Look up to admire the ceiling with panels glorifying the Republic. We think the most beautiful is Veronese's *Apotheosis of Venice* from 1583.

The palace also contains an arresting display of ancient arms. From the main building, you can cross the Bridge of Sighs to the doge's prisons. Do not miss the underadvertised tour of the *itinerari segreti* (secret passageways), which shows you the offices and Hall of the Chancellery, the State Inquisitor's room, the Torture Chamber (where suspects were interrogated as they hung by their wrists) and the notorious *piombi* prison cells under the lead roof, from which Casanova made his daring escape in 1755. Yet the full horror awaited prisoners who were confined to the dark, humid *pozzi* dungeons at ground level, which often flooded.

April-October daily 8:30 am-7 pm; November-March daily 8:30 am-5:30 pm. 18 euros adults.

## Piazza San Marco

Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-271-5911

<http://www.visitmuve.it>

With three sides of the Piazza lined by dignified palazzos featuring elaborate marble facades and the fourth showcasing San Marco's Basilica with its four bronze horses and crown of Byzantine domes, this is, as Napoleon put it, the "finest drawing room in Europe." The northern side is composed of the 16th-century Procuratie Vecchie (the old city administrative offices), and the southern side of the 17th-century Procuratie Nuove (new city administrative offices). Across from the Basilica is Napoleon's 1810 addition, now housing the Museo Correr. Chairs and tables spill into the open plaza, and serenading orchestras perform in front of arched porticos that shelter expensive shops and cafes.



Filled with splendid works such as the Campanile and two Syrian pillars (brought to Venice in 1256), the Piazza San Marco is a feast for the eyes. Don't miss the Piazzetta di San Marco in front of the Doge's Palace, which contains the Marciana Library (built in the 1530s) and the two monolithic columns holding symbols of the city, the lion of Saint Mark and Saint Theodore in the act of slaying a dragon; or the Piazzetta dei Leoncini on the other side of the Basilica, with its two small red marble lions. The clock tower (featuring two bronze figures, the Moors, that strike the hour) and its intricate astronomical clock can be visited with a reserved guided tour (12.50 euros), available in English Monday-Wednesday at 10 and 11 am; Thursday-Sunday at 2 and 3 pm. All visitors must be over the age of 6. The clock tower is inaccessible for those with walking difficulties. The visit is not recommended for pregnant women, or for those who suffer from claustrophobia, vertigo, heart conditions or asthma.

Closed Christmas and New Year's Day. .

### **Ponte dei Sospiri**

At the head of Riva degli Schiavoni (behind the Doge's Palace), San Marco  
Venice, Italy

The Bridge of Sighs was aptly named: Prisoners crossed it on their way to meet the state inquisitors. From Ponte di Paglia, an ornate bridge beside the Doge's Palace, you can look up at the bridge. Dwarfed by the palace and the prisons, this marble structure seems to peer out at the open water from the two lonely eyes of its windows. While touring the Doge's Palace, you can walk across the bridge and look out at the canal from within.

### **Ponte di Rialto**

Originally little more than a bunch of boats spanning the Grand Canal, the now-massive Rialto Bridge was built in marble by architect Antonio Da Ponte in 1588-91. Its construction cost 250,000 gold ducats, a breathtaking sum in those days. Halfway down the Grand Canal, it lies midway between the train station and Piazza San Marco. It is by far the most elaborate and memorable of the bridges that cross the Grand Canal. Two rows of tiny shops line the span, and you will find an illuminating view of the very active canal at the top.

### **Scala Contarini del Bovolo**

Corte del Bovolo, San Marco 4299 (off Campo Manin)  
Venice, Italy

<http://www.scalabovolo.org/bovolo2.html>

Contarini's staircase is one of the architectural gems hidden in the winding streets of Venice. However, it can only be enjoyed from the street below. Called del Bovolo (the Venetian word for *snail*), the tower's exterior spiral staircase is lined by spiraling arched windows that mirror the building's facade in a mixture of early-Renaissance, Byzantine and late-Gothic styles.

### **Scuola Grande di San Rocco**

San Polo 3052  
Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-523-4864

<http://www.scuolagrandesanrocco.it>

One of the most visited sites for art in Venice, this former confraternity building completed in 1549 is renowned for its paintings by Jacopo Tintoretto, including his *Allegories, Life and Passion of Christ* (in the



Sala dell'Albergo) with a stunning crucifixion scene, and *Ancient and New Testament Episodes* (on the walls and ceiling of the upper hall) with a striking *Temptation of Christ* and an equally fascinating *Adoration of the Shepherds*. Rent a mirror at the entrance to avoid neck pain. Be sure to see Titian's *Annunciation* near the entrance of the Sala dell'Albergo. Unfortunately, the paintings are not very well-lit.

Daily 9:30 am-5:30 pm. 10 euros adults (includes audioguide).

## Museums

Visitors going to many museums may want to consider purchasing one of the museum passes. They provide discounts and allow visitors to skip ticketing lines. The Museum Pass (24 euros) is valid for six months, but allows only one admission to each Venice Civic museum. The MUVE Friend Card (45 euros) allows one year of unlimited access to the permanent collections in all Venice civic museums, including those at St. Mark's Square. Unlike the Venezia Unica City Pass Card, museum passes are valid for longer durations than a 24-hour period. The Museum Pass can be purchased at all participating museums or online (<http://www.veneziaunica.it>); the MUVE Friend Card can be purchased online. <http://www.visitmuve.it>.

### Ca' d'Oro

Cannaregio 3932  
Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-522-2349

<http://www.cadoro.org>

The House of Gold (named for its once-abundant gilt work and otherwise colorful facade) houses the Galleria Franchetti. A typical example of an ancient noble palazzo, its wedding-cake facade is a gorgeous display of Gothic architecture. It displays sculptures, bronzes and paintings by Venetian, Flemish and Dutch artists—including Jacopo Sansovino, Alessandro Vittoria, Vittore Carpaccio, Titian, Andrea Mantegna, Giorgione, Jacopo Tintoretto and Van Dyck. The mosaic floor of the palazzo's *androne* (the large ground-floor room opening on the canal) is impressive, as are the views from the second- and third-floor marble balconies onto the Grand Canal and fish market.

Monday 8:15 am-2 pm, Tuesday-Sunday 8:15 am-7:15 pm. 12 euros adults.

### Ca' Pesaro

Santa Croce 2076  
Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-721-127

<http://capesaro.visitmuve.it>

This famed baroque palazzo dating from 1628 houses the Museo d'Arte Orientale (with Japanese art from the Edo Period) and the International Gallery of Modern Art, which was founded in 1897 as a showcase for modern Venetian artists. On permanent display are works by such famed artists as Henri Matisse, Gustav Klimt, Paul Klee, Wassily Kandinsky, Marc Chagall and Joan Miro alongside 19th- and 20th-century Italian artists. Various temporary art exhibitions are also on display.

Tuesday-Sunday 10 am-6 pm. Full price: 10,00 euro.



## Ca' Rezzonico

Dorsoduro 3136

Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-241-0100

<http://carezzonico.visitmuve.it>

This museum of art from the 1700s presents many aspects of life in 18th-century Venice. It contains a complete apothecary, a floor dedicated to noblewomen, and works of art by Vittore Carpaccio, Giambattista Cima, Jacopo Tintoretto, Pietro Longhi, Lelio Orsi and Giovanni Canaletto. With a ballroom taking up the entire width of the palazzo, frescoes by Giovanni Tiepolo and Francesco Guardi, carved furniture and provocative paintings, the museum offers a glimpse into the life of the wealthy Venetians of a bygone era. Poet Robert Browning's son purchased the palazzo in 1880, and Browning himself lived there from 1888 until his death in late 1889.

Wednesday-Monday 10 am-5 pm November-March, 10 am-6 pm April-October. 10 euros adults.

## Centro d'Arte Contemporanea di Punta della Dogana

Dorsoduro 2

Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 199-122-122 within Italy

<http://www.palazzograssi.it/punta-della-dogana/museo/arte-contemporanea-venezia.html>

In June 2009, the Punta della Dogana, the former customs office of the Republic of Venice, was reopened for the 53rd biennial art festival. The building sits on a spot of land between the Canal Grande and the Canale della Giudecca behind the Santa Maria della Salute church, and was redesigned by the famous Japanese architect Tadao Ando, who had already transformed the Palazzo Grassi on Canale Grande. It now houses another museum owned by French billionaire and art collector Francois Pinault. Works from Maurizio Cattelan, Jeff Koons, Edward Kienholz, Sigmar Polke, David Hammons and Julie Mehretu are on display, but also many works of lesser-known artists. The building alone is worth a visit.

Daily except Tuesday 10 am-7 pm. 15 euros.

## Fondazione Querini Stampalia

Campo Santa Maria Formosa, Castello 5252

Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-271-1411

<http://www.querinistampalia.org>

This beautifully restored Renaissance palace offers an idea of what life was like for the nobility. A wonderful picture gallery features scenes of everyday life by Pietro Longhi. Modern leading architect Carlo Scarpa has made noteworthy additions.

Tuesday-Sunday 10 am-6 pm. 10 euros.

## Gallerie dell'Accademia

Campo della Carita

Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-520-0345





<http://www.gallerieaccademia.org>

Venice's premier art museum features one of the most important collections of 14th- to 18th-century Venetian paintings. Room 1 has Byzantine and international Gothic art, including the early Venetian painter Paolo Veneziano's sumptuous *Coronation of the Virgin* (1325). See the superb, enigmatic landscape of *Tempesta* by Giorgione—centuries ahead of its time—and several works by Jacopo Bellini, Andrea Mantegna, Jacopo Tintoretto, Titian (with a huge *Presentation of the Virgin* in the Sala dell'Albero), Paolo Veronese (*Feast in the House of Levi*) and Giovanni Tiepolo. Note Vittore Carpaccio's *Healing of the Madman* (circa 1496), which shows the old wooden Rialto Bridge before it collapsed in 1524. Because it's high on many people's lists of places to see, be prepared for a wait and go early to see everything.

Monday 8:15 am-2 pm, Tuesday-Sunday 8:15 am-7:15 pm. 15 euros adults.

### Museo Correr

San Marco 52  
Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-240-5211

<http://correr.visitmuve.it>

This rich collection of Venetian art and history includes relics from the Repubblica Serenissima and paintings by Jacopo Bellini, Vittore Carpaccio (including his famous works *Portrait of a Young Man in a Red Hat* and *Two Venetian Ladies*) and others. Don't miss the marble sculptures by Canova.

Daily 10 am-5 pm November-March, 10 am-7 pm April-October. 19 euros adults.

### Museo della Musica

Chiesa di San Maurizio, Campo San Maurizio  
Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-241-1840

<http://www.interpretiveneziani.com/en/museo-della-musica.php>

Information on Antonio Vivaldi as well as musical instruments from the baroque period are on display in a restored church. Music by Vivaldi and other composers can also be purchased.

Daily 10 am-7 pm. Free.

### Museo del Vetro

Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-527-4718

<http://www.visitmuve.it>

This museum on Murano celebrates the island's infamous glass artistry and industry.

Daily 10 am-5 pm November-March, 10 am-6 pm April-October. 10 euros. .

### Museo Ebraico

Museo Ebraico di Venezia Cannaregio 2902-B  
Venice, Italy



**Phone:** 041-715-359

<http://www.museoebraico.it>

This museum displays works of art and items related to Jewish religious life, such as historic *ketuboth* (wedding contracts), precious silverware and ritual objects. It also offers guided tours of the ghetto in English, and area synagogues and the Jewish cemetery can be visited.

Sunday-Friday 10 am-7 pm June-September, till 5 pm October-May. 4 euros. Guided tours in various languages cost 10 euros (including museum admission).

## Palazzo Fortuny

Calle a Fianco Ca'Pesaro 3780  
Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 41-520-0995

<http://fortuny.visitmuve.it>

Once owned by the Pesaro family, in the early 1900s this Gothic palace became the atelier of Mariano Fortuny, the Spanish-born artist and textile genius whose silk lamps and couture graced homes and figures of European high society. In 1984, inspired by the deceased Maestro Fortuny's work, Venetia Studium was founded by a group of designers who create and sell works inspired by Fortuny, including silk lamps, scarves and household decorative items. The impressive palace, tucked down a quiet alleyway near the Sant'Angelo area, is open to the public during temporary exhibits, which are held seasonally throughout the year.

12 euros.

## Peggy Guggenheim Collection

Palazzo Venier dei Leoni, Dorsoduro 701  
Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-240-5411

<http://www.guggenheim-venice.it>

U.S. patron of the arts Peggy Guggenheim lived in this famous home-museum, the Palazzo Venier dei Leoni, for 30 years. In 1979, she opened her collection of 20th-century masterpieces to the public. Almost every major modern-art movement is represented, with works by Pablo Picasso, Wassily Kandinsky, Rene Magritte, Joan Miro, Salvador Dali, Alexander Calder, Jackson Pollock and countless others. The palazzo, facing the Grand Canal, also has an outdoor sculpture garden and hosts temporary art exhibits. Its nearby gift shop is full of modern-art mementos, and a lovely terrace coffee shop and restaurant are on-site.

Daily except Tuesday 10 am-6 pm. 15 euros adults.

## Neighborhoods & Districts

### Cannaregio

This is the northern district of Venice that stretches from the Fondamenta Nove to the railway station and along the Grand Canal to the Rialto Bridge. The Fondamenta Nove looks out to the Cimitero on the Isola di St. Michel and to the islands of Murano and Burano beyond. The Strada Nova is the main street of the area, bustling with shops, stalls, restaurants, bars and street theater. Elsewhere, Cannaregio is a tranquil backwater, and at the center of this is the Jewish Ghetto.



Venice has the dubious distinction of having the oldest Jewish ghetto in the world, dating from 1516. The Jewish population was required to remain within the ghetto boundaries, adhere to strict curfews and follow many other harsh regulations. Five synagogues, each representing a different ethnic group, were built between the 16th and 17th centuries. You can learn more about the area's history by visiting the Museo Ebraico (Jewish Museum), where you can join a guided tour of the area. At the center of the district, on the Campo del Ghetto Nuovo in Cannaregio, you'll see Arbit Blatas' moving bronze wall-tablet memorializing the victims of the Holocaust. The area also comprises the Ghetto Vecchio and the Ghetto Novissimo. From the train station, take Lista di Spagna over the bridge Ponte delle Guglie and turn left alongside the Canale di Cannaregio; turn right at the third street.

### **Dorsoduro**

This varied neighborhood stretches from just below the busy Piazzale Roma, next to the railway station, to the Dogana, which looks out over the entrance to the Grand Canal. The charming area hosts the broad Zattere along the Canale della Giudecca, perfect for *fare una passeggiata*, that leisurely and sociable stroll that Italians love. The university is there, as well as several museums.

At the center of Dorsoduro is the lively Campo Santa Margherita, full of outdoor cafes and restaurants, news and vegetable stands. With a fish market in the morning and a flower market twice a week, the *campo* is a microcosm of Venetian life. Parents gather to chat as children hold soccer matches, and students take a break at the popular surrounding bars.

### **Sestiere di San Marco**

This district, in the curve of the Grand Canal from Piazza San Marco to the Rialto Bridge, is where most of the notable sites of Venice are located and, therefore, most of the tourists. It contains the cluster of Piazza San Marco, Basilica di San Marco, Palazzo Ducale and the Bridge of Sighs, as well as the opera house La Fenice and the Palazzo Contarini del Bovolo. The maze of designer-shopping streets of the Frezzeria and San Moise rounds out the picture.

### **Strada Nuova**

This long, wide thoroughfare extends from the Ponte delle Guglie (not far from the train station) to the Santi Apostoli Church, and is the bloodline of the Cannaregio district. Once a wide canal and a series of tight alleyways, it was filled in and urbanized, section by section, in the early 1800s under Austrian rule, and later under the King of Italy; thus earning its name: "New Street." It is filled with shops, fruit and vegetable stands, typical Venetian snack and wine bars, gelato shops, supermarkets, pharmacies and dozens of trattorias for every budget.

### **Via Garibaldi**

Step into another dimension by taking a twilight stroll down Via Garibaldi. The villagelike feel of this Castello neighborhood is particularly poignant in the evening, when locals go out to catch up on the day's happenings and children play in the street. Don't expect many tourists. After the dinner hour, this part of town shuts down for the night.



## Parks & Gardens

### Giardini e la Pineta di Sant'Elena

Via Garibaldi  
Venice, Italy

Commonly known as *i giardini* (the gardens), this vast space of greenery is Venice's breathing room. Towering trees line up and shade a quiet garden that reaches from Via Garibaldi to the sea basin, and overlooks the Lido Island. At the far eastern end of Venice in the Castello district, and near the Biennale exhibit area, this thick cluster of green can be seen as far away as St. Mark's piazzetta. A spot to get away from the crowds, jog, meditate, sip a cup of tea or coffee at a shaded cafe or cool off on a hot summer day.

## Religious Sites

### San Lazzaro degli Armeni Island Monastery

Isola di San Lazzaro degli Armeni  
Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 41-5260-0104

<http://www.mechitar.org>

A 15-minute vaporetto ride from the San Zaccaria waterbus station, this small private island was originally a leper colony. In 1717 the Republic of Venice gifted it to Mkhitar, an Armenian Catholic monk seeking refuge from persecution by the Ottoman Empire. Since then, it's been the central home to the Armenian Mekitarian monastic order. The island's church and calming cloister, its library and vast collection of ancient volumns and manuscripts, and its garden which provides rose petals for the monks' homemade jam, make this a center of primary importance to the Armenian religion, tradition and culture. (The rose petal jam is available in the small gift shop, but its quantities are often limited.) There is a once-daily guided tour at 3:25 pm.

6 euros.

## Shopping

It's hard to convey just how many shops there are in Venice—the sheer number of establishments is overwhelming. You really don't have to go out of your way to find gifts or souvenirs, at least in the well-traveled areas of town. Deciding what to buy is the bigger problem. Many of the shops carry the same stuff—Murano glass in dizzying variety, Carnival masks, lace (much of which is made outside of Venice—you can tell the real handmade stuff by the astronomical prices), and leather and silk goods ranging from inexpensive to luxurious.

Because you'll see the same merchandise everywhere, it can be difficult to buckle down and actually make your purchases. But you'll kick yourself later if you leave empty-handed. Millefiore glass beads are a good bet in Murano; they're distinctive and hard to find elsewhere—and much more expensive when you do find them.

Lots of high-dollar fashion boutiques are clustered around the area just west of Piazza San Marco. You'll also find plenty of souvenir shops around San Marco, though stores in the Rialto Bridge area may be less expensive. Traveling to the islands of Murano and Burano won't lead to many bargains, but you may find larger selections of glass and imported lace. For unusual art and glass, seek out the smaller shops on



Murano, where excellent work is done. And though there are hundreds of small stores and boutiques in Venice, you'll have to travel to the mainland to find a mall.

In Italy, tax is included in the price of the merchandise, and stores are required to post a price for everything being sold. Even in expensive boutiques, there will be a card in the window listing the prices of the items on display. This doesn't mean the prices are inflexible, however. In smaller stores, you will often find that the person waiting on you is the owner who will cut you a deal if it helps make a sale—especially if you pay in cash.

**Shopping Hours:** Generally Monday-Saturday 9 am-12:30 or 1 pm and 3:30-7:30 pm in winter or 4-8 pm in summer. In high season, many places stay open on Sunday and through lunch. Souvenir shops are often open later in the evening and closed on Monday morning.

## Department Stores

### Coin Rialto

Cannaregio 5787  
Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-520-3581

<http://www.coin.it>

This national chain store occupies a multistory Venetian Gothic *palazzetto* near the Rialto Bridge and stocks clothes, accessories, furnishings and housewares. Get a taste of what Italians really look for in their everyday shopping.

Daily 9:30 am-8:30 pm.

## Galleries

### BAC Art Studio

San Vio 862 (between the Accademia Bridge and the Guggenheim Collection), Dorsoduro  
Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-241-2716

<http://www.bacart.com>

If you're looking for a memorable Venice scene to take home with you, be sure to stop at the BAC Art Studio. The eclectic gallery carries paintings, photographs, engravings, posters and sculptures that capture the unusual beauty of the city's landscapes and its people. It is well-known for mixing classic posters with quirky self-portraits by local artist David Dalla Venezia.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-6 pm.

### Bressanello Art Studio

Ponte dei Pagni, Campo San Barnaba  
Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-724-1080

<http://www.fabiobressanellophoto.com>

This elegant little studio near Campo Santa Margherita offers well-priced original photographs, small sculptures and unique paintings by young local artists that avoid the stereotypes of most Venetian



artwork. Particularly strong are the Mondrian-like photographs of Burano by the gallery owner, Fabio Bressanello.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-1 pm and 3-7:30 pm.

## Shopping Areas

### Mercato di Rialto

The little shops lining the Rialto Bridge and surrounding area are usually less expensive than similar places in the San Marco area. When you cross the bridge, walk the inside route—you'll find stands and little shops with jewelry, masks, Murano glass and much more. An interesting side trip is to the nearby fish market. Together with the adjacent Campo Battisti (fruit and vegetable market), the Pescheria is busy in the morning (except Monday).

Daily 10 am-7 pm.

### San Marco

Venice hosts a collection of some of the top names in Italian fashion. The area around Piazza San Marco, especially Calle Vallaresso, Via XXII Marzo and Frezzaria, has a particularly high number of *alta moda* shops. Be prepared to pay.

Borsalino. Calle del Loro, San Marco 4822. Phone 041-241-1945. <http://www.borsalino.it>.

Giorgio Armani. Calle Goldoni, San Marco 4412. Phone 041-520-2413. <http://www.giorgioarmani.com>.

Gucci. San Marco 2102 and San Marco 258. Phone 041-522-9119. <http://www.gucci.com>.

Roberto Cavalli. Calle Vallaresso, San Marco 1314. Phone 041-529-9020. <http://www.robertocavalli.com>.

Prada. Salizada San Moise, San Marco 1464-1469. Phone 041-528-3966. <http://www.prada.com>.

Versace. Campo San Moise, San Marco 1462. Phone 041-520-0057. <http://www.versace.com>.

## Specialty Stores

### Ballarin

Fontamenta Lorenzo Radi 14  
Murano, Italy

**Phone:** 041-739-375

<http://www.ballarin.com>

Some of the most interesting and original glass designs in objets d'art, tableware and jewelry. The colors are vibrant, the designs fresh and the prices reasonable. Definitely a standout amid the sameness surrounding it.

Open daily.



## Attombri

Sottoportico degli Orefici 65, San Polo  
Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-521-2524

<http://www.attombri.com>

Talented young brothers string together unique Byzantine-style necklaces and decorative delights in the old goldsmiths' area near Rialto Bridge.

## Ca' del Sol

Castello 4964  
Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 41-528-5549

<http://www.cadelsolmascherevenezia.com>

This authentic mask-making shop sits on Fondamenta Osmarin, behind the San Zaccaria Church in the Castello district. Before stepping inside this magical place, look across the narrow canal in front of you and into the window of its workshop: You'll see a small group of artisans, needle and thread in hand, quietly creating their products. Inside the shop, you'll be surrounded by traditional *commedia dell'arte* masks and hundreds of bejeweled, gold-leafed and plumed costume ball masks in every color, shape and size. Mask-making workshops for adults and children are held regularly, but must be reserved in advance.

Daily 10 am-10 pm.

## Campielo di Arras

Campielo Squelini, Dorsoduro 3235  
Venice, Italy

A cooperative of people with disabilities produces original hand-woven fabrics, garments and bags in lively colors.

Monday 9 am-1:30 pm, Tuesday-Friday 9 am-1:30 pm and 2-6:30 pm, Saturday 9:30 am-2 pm.

## Cartavenezia

Giudecca 621-F  
Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-524-1283

<http://www.cartavenezia.it>

At this shop, you'll find artistic, handmade paper products, from stamped reliefs to paper shoes, as well as unique, high-quality paper for travelers wishing to capture their view of Venice in paint or ink. Cartavenezia is open by appointment only.

Open Monday 3:30-7:30 pm, Tuesday-Saturday 11 am-1 pm and 3:30-7:30 pm.



## David's Shop

Cannaregio Campo del Ghetto Nuovo No. 2895  
Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-275-0418

<http://www.davidshop.com>

This store carries a wide variety of art objects with Jewish themes, such as millefiori Stars of David and glass menorahs, many made of Murano glass.

Sunday-Friday 10 am-6:30 pm.

## Giovanna Zanella

5641 Castello San Lio  
Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-523-5500

<http://www.giovanzanella.it>

This shop offers unique and stunning shoes and accessories designer-made by a Venice native.

Monday-Saturday 1-8 pm. Most major credit cards.

## Il Canovaccio

Castello 5369-70  
Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-521-0393

<http://www.ilcanovaccio.com>

All the classical Venetian carnival masks made of papier-mache are for sale in this shop, which is proud of its expertise in the application of traditional techniques and materials. You'll recognize the important people of the Commedia dell'Arte: There's Colombina, the doctor with the long nose, funny Arlecchino or the merchant Pantalone. But keep in mind that Venetian masks have a long history of being worn during promiscuous activities.

## L'Isola

Calle de le Botteghe, San Marco 2970 (off Campo Santo Stefano)  
Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-523-1973

<http://www.lisola.com>

The beautifully lighted showroom sells elegant, vibrantly colored Murano glassware by the famous Venetian designers and manufacturers, Carlo and Giovanni Moretti, who established their brand name in 1958. Glasses, vases, bowls, plates, decanters, lighting and modern-art pieces all show bold primary colors and minimal design, which is characteristic for the Moretti style. Everything is of the highest quality, with prices to match. Each piece is handmade in limited numbers and signed. It also ships overseas.

Daily 10 am-7:30 pm.





## Marchini Time

Campo San Luca 4593  
Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-241-3087

<http://www.marchinitime.it>

Choose from classic chocolates, freshly dipped fruits, and delicious cakes and cookies at Venice's most intriguing sweets shop, which also serves coffee and drinks. Fragile cookies are prepackaged to travel safely.

Daily 7 am-8:30 pm.

## Massimo Micheluzzi

Dorsoduro 1071 (just steps away from the Ponte delle Maravegie bridge)  
Venice, Italy

Massimo's gorgeous modern glass sculptures and vases put the overwrought products of most Murano glassworks factories to shame. His work is rapidly being collected by museums, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

## Ottica Vascellari

Ruga Rialto, San Polo 1030  
Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-522-9388

<http://www.otticavascellari.it>

A fresco in the cloister of the San Nicholas church in Treviso (not far from Venice) painted by Thomas of Modena between 1348 and 1352 shows the earliest image of a pair of glasses, which were worn by Cardinal Hughes of Provence. The image is the symbol of this family business, run by Roberto and his sister Cristina Vascellari. Most frames are handmade and show a very individual style, but they are not expensive at all. Your eyes will be professionally checked, and you can usually pick up your glasses the next day.

Monday-Saturday 9 am-12:30 pm and 3-7:30 pm.

## Paolo Brandolisio Workshop

Castello 4725  
Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-522-4155

<http://paolobrandolisio.altervista.org>

*Forcole*, the sculptural oarlocks that are unique to Venetian boats such as gondolas, are works of art as well as utilitarian tools. Paolo Brandolisio is one of only four active *forcole* makers in the world.

## Paolo Olbi

Ponte di Ca'Foscari, Dorsoduro 3253-A  
Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-523-7655



<http://olbi.atspace.com>

They often call Paolo Olbi the "Gutenberg of the Lagoon." Indeed, he may be the last of his kind in Venice. Tourists who drop by may think of his place as just another beautiful shop with business cards and stationery printed on mold-made paper. But Paolo's hand-bound notebooks in rainbow-colored marbled paper and soft vegetable-tanned Tuscan leather, photo albums and pencils with striking patterns are, as Johnny Depp wrote into Paolo's guest book, "the most beautiful books I've ever seen." You can visit Paolo's shop, where he and Beppi, the typesetter, create wood plates of the patterns for the book covers, inspired by old Venetian designs such as the lion or the gryphon, and do the typesetting by hand using old plates and type. In fact, Casanova would have his love letters printed there.

Monday-Friday 10:30 am-12:45 pm and 3:30-7:30 pm.

### **Rivoaltus**

Ponte di Rialto, San Polo 11  
Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-523-6195

<http://www.rivoaltus.it>

Handcrafted paper and tooled-leather books from this tiny shop on top of Rialto Bridge make beautiful souvenirs.

Daily 9 am-7 pm.

### **Sent**

Dorsoduro 669  
Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-520-8136

<http://www.marinaesusannasent.com>

Incredible glass jewelry is created by the amazing Sent sisters, who descend from a centuries-long tradition of glassmakers from Murano. Their main Venice showroom is near the Guggenheim Collection at Campo San Vio. Second location at Ponte San Moise, San Marco (phone 041-520-4014).

Daily 10 am-6:30 pm.

### **Tabarro San Marco di Monica Daniele**

Calle del Scaleter, San Polo 2235  
Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-524-6242

<http://www.monicedaniele.com>

Monica Daniele is famous for crafting the *tabarro*, the historical Venetian cape made of lamb's wool and cashmere. You'll find a wonderfully chaotic selection of hats and coats in her shop.

### **Venetia Studium**

Calle Larga XXII Marzo, San Marco 2425  
Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-523-6953



<http://www.venetiastudium.com>

In the late 19th century, the Spanish fashion designer and lighting engineer Mariano Fortuny (1871-1949) developed a complicated pleating technique in his palazzo in San Marco to create tiny folds in silk. This enabled the production of light, airy clothing that accentuated the natural curves and shape of a woman's body. His famous Delphos dresses inspired by Ancient Greek civilization were worn by such celebrities as Eleanore Duse. But Fortuny also used his methods to create silk lamps, table linens and handkerchiefs. Venetia Studium is a group of designers founded in 1984, which has the exclusive rights to reproduce the stunningly elegant Fortuny lamps. The group also sells sophisticated scarves, shawls, stoles, pillows and purses made of colorful silk and velvet fabrics. The famous pleated Fortuny dresses will max out your credit cards, though.

Daily 10 am-7:30 pm.

### **Vetzeria Artistica Archimede Seguso**

Serenella 18  
Murano, Italy

**Phone:** 041-739-234

<http://www.aseguso.com>

There you'll find art glassware produced by one of the most renowned masters from Murano. Particularly famous for glass sculptures in intense colors. One showroom is located at Piazza San Marco 143; if you have time, schedule an appointment to visit the furnace on Murano.

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

### **Vittorio Costantini**

Calle del Fumo, Cannaregio 5311 (near Fondamenta Nuove)  
Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-522-2265

<http://www.vittoriocostantini.com>

Vittorio, born on the island of Burano, is one of the greatest glass masters of Venice. Some of his multicolored insects, iridescent butterflies, bugs, birds, fish and colorful flowers have been shown in numerous exhibitions worldwide and even in renowned museums of natural science because of their faithful reproduction of nature.

Monday-Friday 9:30 am-1 pm and 2:15-5:30 pm.

### **Vizio Virtu**

Castello 5988  
Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-275-0149

<http://www.viziovirtu.com>

A paradise for chocaholics, this place called "Vice-Virtue" offers a mind-blowing selection of hand-crafted chocolates with exotic flavors. Some creations are filled with Barolo wine, blueberry, basil, tobacco, ginger or pumpkin. Do drink the iced chocolate in summer—it's wonderfully refreshing.

Daily 10 am-7:30 pm.



## Dining

### Dining Overview

There are a number of good places to eat in Venice, especially if you're in the market for seafood or regional dishes. In fact, with such a prolific number of places to get a meal, it may be hard to choose. If you're looking for a break from Italian food, your choices are dramatically lessened. As a general rule, reservations are recommended.

Seafood is king of the table in traditional Venetian cuisine. One local delicacy, *sarde in saor* (fresh sardines, fried and then marinated in onion, vinegar and raisins), gives an idea of the strong and tasty flavors to be found in Venice. *Baccala* (salt cod) dishes are on many menus, as is crab (variably called *granseola*, *moleche* and other names), as well as exotic seafood salads and squid. Risottos of all colors are common.

Don't look for genuine Venetian recipes (or even particularly good food) in restaurants with a menu of the day prominently displayed in four languages. You'll find better meals elsewhere, usually just off the main streets. If you are on a budget (or even if you aren't), follow the locals to a *bacaro* or *osteria* (small publike restaurant). The delicious *cicchetti* (little appetizers often made of fish or meat) and *ombre* (glasses of wine) are too good to pass up. There are several choices around the Rialto area.

Vegetarians usually don't have problems in Venice, as many pasta dishes, salads and pizzas are made without meat. If you drop by a *bacaro*, you'll also find a variety of Venetian-style vegetables to choose from. Families will gravitate to pizzerias, which really aren't just for children and will probably offer more variety in toppings than you expect. Pizza is a common meal for adults and children alike.

At coffee and pastry shops, as well as *bacari*, you'll find two prices for every item on the menu—the standing price and the sitting price. Often you will see a sign added to the price list, letting you know that it refers to products consumed at the bar only.

Dining in Venice (and the whole of Italy) has become far more pleasant for nonsmokers, as all restaurants by law have posted "no smoking" signs in their indoor dining rooms.

Restaurants are generally open for lunch 12:30-3 pm and for dinner 7 pm-midnight, and most close one or two days a week.

Expect to pay within these general guidelines for a dinner for one, not including drinks: \$ = less than 30 euros; \$\$ = 30 euros-40 euros; \$\$\$ = 41 euros-50 euros; \$\$\$\$ = more than 50 euros. Tax is legally included in menu prices, but watch out for an extra *servizio* (service charge) and *coperto* (cover charge). Tips are automatically included at the more expensive places.

### Local & Regional

#### Al Mascarone

Calle Lunga Santa Maria Formosa, Castello 5225  
Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-522-5995



<http://www.osteriamasaron.it>

This beautiful old trattoria is decorated with old photographs and paintings done by friends of the restaurant, but its greatest asset is Gigi, who has been in charge of this Venetian classic for more than 30 years and is famous for his heavenly spaghetti *alle seppie, in nero* (black pasta with ink fish). Also try *sepioline* (small fried cuttlefish) and if you happen to be in town in late autumn, do order *canocchie* (delicious Mediterranean mantis shrimps), which taste most tender and aromatic at that time of the year. Another culinary classic is *fegato alla veneziana* (liver Venetian style).

Monday-Saturday noon-3 pm and 7-11 pm. Reservations required. \$\$\$\$. No credit cards.

### Antiche Carampane

San Polo 1911

Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-524-0165

<http://www.antichecarampane.com>

Francesco and his mother Piera Bertoluzzi Librai run a fabulous small trattoria tucked away in an untouristy corner of Venice (but only a short walk away from Rialto Bridge). It's attended by local fishermen in the know and is definitely proud of its slogan: "No Pizza, No Lasagne, No Menu Turistico." Fish and seafood are freshly bought at the nearby Rialto fish market. Try the *fritto misto* with *moleche* (also spelled *moeche*); those delicious soft-shell crabs are picked straight from the lagoon and are said to be the best in Venice because they are fried without eggs. The spaghetti with crab meat is also recommended, or go for the fiery pasta made with small mussels and tomatoes. The delightful *branzino* (sea bass) is prepared in a pepperoni crust. Leave room for the heavenly desserts. The wines are also recommended. In summer, you can dine under umbrellas in the small alley.

Tuesday-Saturday 12:30-2:30 pm and 7:30-11 pm. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$. No credit cards.

### Bancogiro

Campo San Giacometto, San Polo 122

Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-523-2061

<http://www.osteriabancogiro.it>

Luscious, light meals served in what used to be Venice's first private bank. On the edge of the Rialto market district, this place has divine outdoor seating on the Grand Canal. No pasta, but fresh fish served with vegetables, such as *branzino con arancia e cumino* (sea bass with orange and cumin) and regional cheeses and sausages. Excellent wines.

Tuesday-Sunday 9 am-midnight. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

### Ca' d'Oro alla Vedova

Calle del Pistor, Cannaregio 3912 (across Strada Nova from the Ca' d'Oro museum)

Venice, Italy

A favorite of locals, Ca' d'Oro alla Vedova is a beautiful example of simple Venetian cuisine. It's an extremely popular spot for *cicchetti* and can get chaotic and crowded. Try the freshly grilled squid or the mussels, *schie fritte* (fried tiny gray lagoon shrimp) or the delicious *fegato alla veneziana* (liver Venetian style).



Open Monday-Wednesday, Friday and Saturday 11:30 am-2:30 pm and 6:30-10:30 pm; Sunday 6:30-10:30 pm. \$\$-\$\$\$.

### Dalla Marisa

Fondamenta San Giobbe Canareggio 652-B (as you walk down the Lista di Spagna from the train station, take the last left before crossing the first bridge; walk past Ponte dei Tre Archi bridge)  
Venice, Italy

Signora Marisa hails from a dynasty of butchers. Her small place may not be very comfortable, but you will rub shoulders with locals, *gondolieri* and the odd tourist lucky enough to find it (try to avoid the "rush hour" between noon and 1 pm if you arrive without a reservation). Winter is high season for meat and fowl. Expect delicacies such as stuffed pheasant, pasta with wild boar sugo or veal ragout. The beef risotto is wonderful. In summer more fish dishes appear. Try marinated sea bass or grated scallops. It's best to go for a set menu, which includes a decent house wine.

Sunday-Tuesday noon-2:15 pm, Wednesday-Saturday noon-2:15 pm and 8-11 pm. Closed in August. Reservations highly recommended. \$\$\$. No credit cards.

### La Bitta

Calle Lunga San Barnaba Dorsoduro 2753-A  
Venice, Italy

This establishment just off Campo San Barnaba serves meat dishes ranging from duck to Tuscan beef—but no seafood. Enjoy the *agnolotti* (big ravioli) filled with seasonal vegetables, such as spring asparagus with a Taleggio cheese sauce, but leave plenty of room for the divine desserts, rich in chocolate and hazelnut cream. Good wine list.

Open Monday-Saturday 6-10:30 pm. Closed in July. \$\$-\$\$\$\$. No credit cards.

### Le Bistrot de Venise

4685 Calle dei Fabbri  
Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-523-6651

<http://www.bistrotdevenise.com>

Between Campo San Luca and Piazza San Marco, this small restaurant pursues the rediscovery of Venetian cuisine and wines from the Renaissance to modern times with a selection of seasonal and regional offerings. Good French and Italian cheeses and wine list. Occasional live cabaret or jazz music in the evening, as well as an extensive art and literary program that includes late-afternoon discussions (in Italian) as well as food and wine tastings.

Daily noon-3 pm and 7 pm-midnight. Reservations recommended. \$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

### Osteria al Diavolo e l'Acquasanta

Calle della Madonna, San Polo 561-B  
Venice, Italy

Located on a quiet alleyway steps from the Rialto Bridge, this small osteria has been serving fine Venetian food to locals, and more recently tourists, for more than 20 years. Owned and run by Silvano, whose gruff way and kind heart respect the tradition of good Venetian food, the real star there is his wife,



Anna, who does all the cooking and baking. Try her creamy seafood lasagna or pasta with *bottarga*—salty fish roe. Don't skip the cheesecake or *zaeti* biscotti (corn flour and raisin cookies dusted with powdered sugar) accompanied by a glass of sweet dessert wine.

Wednesday-Monday 9:30 am-11 pm. Reservations not accepted. \$\$\$\$. No credit cards.

### Osteria Da Alberto

Calle Giacinto Gallina Cannaregio 5401  
Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 041-523-8153

<http://www.osteriadaalberto.it>

Of the many *bacari* or *osterie* in the city, we especially love this one. One reason is that you'll see older Venetian specialties on the menu that are almost impossible to find in other restaurants, such as *polenta con le seppie in nero* (polenta with ink fish in black sauce). These delicacies practically cry out for an *ombra* (glass of wine).

Daily 10 am-11 pm. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

### Osteria Oliva Nera

Salizada dei Greci 3417/3447, Castello  
Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 41-522-2170

<http://www.olivanera.com>

Fresh products prepared as Venetian tradition commands, but with a contemporary flair. Isabella, the owner and gracious host, comes from a line of restaurateurs, and she oversees her quaint family restaurant with pride and a smile. Located behind the Saint George of the Greeks church, the menu changes with the seasons, but includes fresh produce, fish and meat, a variety of pasta dishes and risotto, and extra virgin olive oil.

Thursday-Tuesday 6:30-10 pm. Reservations available online. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards.

### Trattoria al Gatto Nero

Via Giudecca 88, Burano  
Venice, Italy

**Phone:** 41-730-120

<http://www.gattonero.com>

Located on the island of Burano, this bastion of Buranese tradition was born as a simple inn soon after World War II ended. In 1965, Ruggero Bovo, the current owner, began serving fine seafood that the locals continue to rave about and visitors dream of returning to. Try the *pappardelle pasta con scampi e ricotta affumicata* (wide egg-noodle pasta with prawns and smoked ricotta cheese) or the delicious *zuppa di crostacei* (shellfish soup)—a hearty dish that contains just the right dose of chili pepper. When sea bass, sole, shrimp, eel and monkfish are as fresh as they are there, ordering a simple *grigliata mista* ("mixed grilled") is always a good choice. This island and this restaurant are known for their *bussolai biscotti* (egg and butter cookies) served with sweet wine.



Tuesday-Saturday 12:30-3 pm and 7:30-9 pm, Sunday 12:30-3 pm. Closed first week of July and 15 November-4 December. \$\$\$\$ . 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 well-polished and accomplished.

**Appointments**—Having an intermediary is essential. Without someone to make the appropriate contacts, you'll find it hard to get much accomplished. Your go-between can help schedule meetings, which should be set up well in advance. It is 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. Your Italian counterparts may or may not be as prompt: Those in the northern part of the country generally are; those to the south are less so.

**Personal Introductions**—Greet others with a handshake and a slight nod. Titles are important: Use any professional titles that are supplied on introduction or, better yet, ask for a list of the participants and their official titles in advance of the meeting. Continue to use the title and last name unless you are instructed otherwise. Many Italians have two business cards: One with their business contact information that they use for formal contacts; the other has personal contact information and is used for more social occasions. Do not exchange business cards at social events.

**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, and 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. If you want to pay, tip the waiter ahead of time and ask that the bill be quietly given to you. If you do not make such arrangements in advance, you will have to ask for the check; it will not be brought to you automatically.

**Body Language**—Italians typically converse while standing close to one another. They tend to gesture when talking, and handshakes can extend longer than in other cultures.

**Gift Giving**—Small but high-quality gifts are appropriate in some situations: Ask your intermediary for advice. If you are invited to a home, take flowers or gift-wrapped chocolates. Exercise caution in giving wine: Many Italians are experts; if you're not, ask for advice and make sure what you chose is an excellent vintage.

**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, as are art, travel and Italian culture. Politics, religion and the less-positive sides of Italy, including Mussolini, World War II and the mafia, are probably better avoided.





## Personal Safety

In Venice, as in most major tourist cities, the main danger is theft—watch out for pickpockets and purse snatchers. Secure your wallet and bags when visiting crowded sites, including the area near the Rialto Bridge, Piazza San Marco and Ponte della Paglia (in front of the Bridge of Sighs), as well as when traveling on crowded ferries. Places where tourists stop to contemplate the city's beauty are favorite "working areas" of pickpockets. Do not leave backpacks or other bags unattended on boats or in public places.

It is a good idea to have a small purse or wallet with an ATM card and some currency in a securely zippered pocket and keep other cards, passports and so forth out of sight in a money belt or neck wallet hidden under clothing.

Attractive young women may draw stares and unwanted attention. Though this may sometimes be uncomfortable, it's not a threat. Remember that a sharp look or word will almost always deter undesired Romeos.

For police (*polizia*) assistance, dial 113; you can also contact the military police (*carabinieri*) by dialing 112.

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

## Health

No vaccinations are necessary to enter the country, and both food and tap water are safe to consume. Local habit is to drink bottled water, but it isn't a necessity. Sanitation is the same as in any other major European city. The canals are nowhere near as dirty as they once were, but we would still caution against taking a dip. Summertime hazards include mosquito bites and sunstroke, so be prepared or visit a pharmacy for protective creams in both cases.

In case of a medical emergency, dial 118. Having an Italian speaker on hand would be a good idea. Some hotels have English-speaking doctors on call, and you should be able to communicate with doctors in the hospitals, although most aren't fluent in English. Pharmacies, called *farmacie*, are marked by a red or green cross and are plentiful in the tourist areas of Venice. Even simple drugs, such as aspirin, are available only at pharmacies. Though there is no single 24-hour pharmacy; individual stores stay open late on a rotating basis. Pharmacies post the necessary information on their doors about which locations are open at night, and a list is published in local newspapers as well.

The city hospital Ospedale Civile, located at San Giovanni e Paolo, Castello 6777, has high-quality health care, and its emergency room is open 24 hours (phone 041-529-4111). Ambulances are high-speed launches and can be summoned by phoning 118.

Also, check with your insurance company before departure about travel insurance and reimbursements for medical assistance overseas.

Smoking is prohibited in all enclosed public places, and the ban is surprisingly well-respected.



## Disabled Advisory

Venice is not very friendly to visitors with physical disabilities. Only a few bridges have platforms for wheelchairs. Steps are everywhere. Hotels, restaurants and museums are often inaccessible to disabled visitors. Though people are generally kind and helpful, you should plan your trip carefully.

Visitors in wheelchairs should avoid Venice late October-February, when Piazza San Marco and other low-lying areas are often flooded. The temporary walkways are not accessible to wheelchairs. Although the landing stages for all the vaporetti are accessible, these, too, may be unusable when high water makes them unusually slick. Vaporetto access is free to those in wheelchairs. The public toilets near the main sites (such as Piazza San Marco) have special disabled facilities.

The tourist offices at Piazza San Marco, the airport and the railway station have transportation information and maps indicating which areas are more accessible. Also note that at Stazione di Santa Lucia, in front of platform 5, there's an office that offers assistance to the disabled, such as getting in and out of the station and on and off trains. Attendants on the public boats are generally helpful getting disabled passengers on and off. Special water taxis from the airport to Venice are also available—a reservation is required. Phone 41-523-9977. <http://www.sanitrans.net>.

The helpful Citta per Tutti can assist disabled visitors to Venice. Citta per Tutti, Venice Council Office, Ca' Farsetti, San Marco 4136 (ground floor, URP office). Phone 041-274-8144. For additional information, visit the city of Venice's website. <http://www.comune.venezia.it/handicap>.

## Facts

### Dos & Don'ts

Do dress appropriately and be respectful when visiting churches. The official dress code in all churches requires that your shoulders, knees and midriff must be covered. Women rarely cover their heads upon entering a church anymore, and you will see as many bareheaded locals as tourists. Also remember to turn off cell phones when visiting churches, art galleries and museums.

Don't wear jeans to restaurants in the evening, except in *pizzerie* and small *osterie*. You will be better received if you respect this convention.

Do keep your voice low in restaurants, and remember that even though those around you are speaking Italian, they may be perfectly able to overhear and understand what you say in English.

Do learn a few polite words and phrases, such as "please" (*per piacere* or *per favore*) and "thank you" (*grazie*). This simple courtesy will set you apart as having made an effort to be polite. Before beginning a question in English, it is polite to ask first if the person speaks English. The reply will nearly always be "a little" even when the speaker's English is nearly perfect.

Do attempt to pronounce Italian words correctly. Just remember that the letter "c" followed by an "i" or "e" has the English "ch" sound, while a "c" followed by an "i" or "e" has the English "k" sound. Thus, *che citta!* (what a town!) is pronounced *KAY chee-TAH*.



## Geostats

**Passport/Visa Requirements:** Citizens of Canada and the U.S. need passports but not visas. All visitors must present proof of sufficient funds and onward passage. Reconfirm travel document requirements with your carrier before departure.

**Population:** 260,060.

**Languages:** Italian.

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

**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. 50 Hz.

**Telephone Codes:** 39, country code; 041, city code;

## Money

### Taxes

The Italian tax on the purchase of goods, called IVA or VAT, is roughly 21% on most items (some items and may have reduced rates of 10% or 4%). It's included in price tags. Look for shops that display a *Tax-free for Tourists Service* sign on their windows: It may be possible for non-European Union residents to get the 21% back. When you spend a minimum of 154.94 euros (VAT included) in the same shop on a single receipt, ask for the necessary tax-free declaration form (you'll need to show your passport).

Generally, shop owners will be quick to use the possible discount as incentive for you to buy and will give you all of the necessary details to receive an easy refund. Show this form at airport customs before you enter the gate and be prepared to show the original receipt and the unused items. Have the customs officer stamp the form. Depending on the refund company, you may receive a cash refund on the spot, or you may have to mail the form and then receive a credit on your credit card.

The Municipality of Venice has a tourist tax for visitors staying overnight, which is levied on the first five consecutive nights of any overnight stay. Tariffs vary according to season, location and to the type of accommodation (5 euros for five-star hotels). Children ages 10-15 pay half the tax fare, whereas children younger than 10 are not charged at all.

### Tipping

Tipping is not obligatory in Venice restaurants and hotels, as service is often included in your bill (check first); however, it is always appreciated. One or two euros can be left as a sign of good will if the service and the restaurant are above average. But in some cases, tips are expected and not tipping might mean unsatisfactory service.

It is customary to tip the hotel porter between 0.50 euros and 1 euro per piece of luggage. At the end of a gondola tour, especially if you had a singer and accordion music, tip the musicians 10%-20% of the trip price. When visiting a small church, a guide may show you around. He or she won't ask for money but will greatly appreciate a donation for the church.



## Weather

Venice is nearly always humid. The water that makes the city so unique also keeps the humidity level at about 80%. Keep this in mind, as the temperatures will feel more extreme. December-February, the average temperature is 32-37 F/0-3 C. Fog and wind often roll in with the coldest months. In summer, the humidity can become very uncomfortable. The hottest months are July and August, with average temperatures ranging 86-91 F/30-33 C.

In the fall and winter, sometimes even through spring, the water often rises above usual levels and floods many of the streets and squares, usually for a few hours at a time. Called *acqua alta*, or high water, the locals are used to dealing with it—tall rubber boots become de rigueur.

## What to Wear

The city's hot summers and cold winters seem even more extreme because of high humidity levels. In the hottest months (July and August), lightweight cotton clothes are preferable. Be sure to wear a hat and apply insect repellent and sunscreen before venturing out in the heat of the day.

In winter, dress in layers so that you can adjust to different temperatures when you stop at bars, museums and shops. In the coldest months (December-February), a scarf, hat and gloves are suggested, as well as an overcoat. You may also need a pair of waterproof boots in case of high water (*acqua alta*). Some hotels provide them, but you can buy an inexpensive pair if necessary. Do not, however, wear boots to a business meeting or a concert—take your shoes along in a bag and change before or upon entering the building.

Comfortable shoes are essential in Venice, whether you are there on business or for pleasure. Walking is often the only way to get around the city. The city's business dress code is quite flexible. For men, a suit and tie are always best. There are no rules for women, as long as you dress fashionably (this is Italy, after all).