



ELLE CITY GUIDE

spotlight on

# rome

History, culture and damn good food collide in this travel trifecta. *Welcome to la dolce vita*

**T**hey say all roads lead to Rome – and it’s not hard to see why it’s one of the most visited cities in the world. The Italian capital is the undisputed winner when

it comes to the country’s historical and cultural significance, and with its array of amazing trattorias, it’s also a food lover’s paradise.

While it may lack the polish and sleek glamour of style mecca Milan, Rome provides a chaotic counterbalance to its northern neighbour. And thanks to a handful of new world-class flagships (Valentino and Fendi included) and an exciting offering of independent boutiques, the Eternal City’s out to prove there’s more to Italian fashion than sexpot dresses and leathersgoods. Just keep an eye on your credit card limits – you have been warned.



ASTROLOGO OTTICA

## SHOP BY SUBURB

*If you’ve only got a day, pick one area and go hard*



VALENTINO

KIKO MILANO



### Spanish Steps

The famed Piazza di Spagna is home to the world’s largest Valentino store, a stunning David Chipperfield-designed space that’s well worth visiting (and not just for a pair of Rockstuds). Off the piazza runs Via Condotti, an exclusive strip that boasts flagships like Prada, Gucci and Bulgari. Around the corner is the more commercial Via del Corso – stop off at Kiko Milano (Italy’s answer to Sephora) on your way to Astrologo Ottica to browse directional eyewear and losselliani for statement jewellery. And make sure you visit Via del Babuino for brands such as Emporio Armani and menswear favourite David Naman.



## SLEEK CITY STAYS

Romans don't do things by halves, and neither should you. Here's how to holiday in the best kind of style: your own



### ◀ For the history buff... DOM HOTEL

This building dates back to the 1600s and was originally a palace before it was transformed into a monastery, and now a hotel. On the walls you'll notice beautiful 400-year-old stone inscriptions, which have been taken from the floor of the nearby church. But more than just papal beauty, the DOM is a slice of luxury hidden away from Rome's hustle and bustle. Suites are designed to capture the atmosphere of Italy's most aristocratic homes – even the hotel's bar and restaurant, The Deer Club, maintains the exclusive feel, thanks to its plush velvet booths, chandeliers and Andy Warhol artwork.

➤ [domhotelroma.com](http://domhotelroma.com)

### For the interiors queen... G-ROUGH ▶

From the mirrored Seletti tiles to the classic '50s furniture, G-Rough brings a fresh eye to luxury. The rooms showcase an undone minimalism, with claw-foot bathtubs, original wooden ceilings and Malin + Goetz toiletries. Clearly, owner and seventh-generation Roman Gabriele Salini has impeccable taste, so you know any of his recommendations are bound to be good – which is why he's left you a round-up of his favourite local places and things to do. Can't imagine going home without the crisp linen bedding? The makers, Society, are located nearby.

➤ [g-rough.com](http://g-rough.com)



### ◀ For the designer darling... PORTRAIT ROMA

Owned by the Ferragamo family, this townhouse sits above the flagship store on Via Condotti. The attention to detail is next-level: there's an in-room iPad with curated guides to Rome's best restaurants, sights and shopping – to go with your 10 per cent discount card for the neighbouring boutiques. Consider it your chic refuge (did we mention the marble bathrooms?) from long, shopping-filled days. But if it's out of your price range, drinks on the rooftop terrace are still a must for the views of Villa Medici and St Peter's Basilica.

➤ [lungarnocollection.com](http://lungarnocollection.com)



### Piazza Navona

Shopping aside, this is one of Rome's most beautiful squares. Pick up paper handmade in ancient mills at Cartoleria Pantheon, classic sneakers at Superga and the cult rosewater tonic from Officina Profumo Farmaceutica di Santa Maria Novella. Leading off the piazza's south-west corner is Via del Governo Vecchio, a street dotted with independent boutiques – including Delfina Delettrez, helmed by the daughter of Fendi's creative director of accessories and menswear Silvia Venturini Fendi. The jewellery label has a subverted twist, such as eye-popping takes on surrealist art (above right). Close by, Omero & Cecilia sells vintage leathers you'll imagine handing down to your daughter. ➔



DELFINA DELETTREZ



CARTOLERIA PANTEON

### Monti

Think Brooklyn's Bedford Avenue meets Le Marais of Paris. Full of eclectic boutiques, Monti boasts Pinterest-worthy interiors stores and fashion finds your friends will turn green for. Head to Mikiway for a great edit of jewellery from Iosselliani and Alex Monroe, Kolby for amazing knits and Nora P for the kind of furniture you really shouldn't browse unless you're willing to foot a pretty hefty freight bill. There's plenty of suitcase-sized contemporary decor at Atelier Monti, and edible treats at Pronto Takeaway Gourmet – which stand even less of a chance of making the trip home... or to your hotel.

IOSELLIANI

MIKIWAY



KOLBY



NORA P







### Ristorante Casa Coppelle

If you want to treat yourself to a fine-dining experience minus the pomp, Casa Coppelle is a must. Run by an Italian-French couple, this chic bistro pays homage to both cultures with refined results (as expected when the menu is dreamed up by the sous chef of the city's only three-Michelin-starred affair). Dishes like prosciutto-wrapped rabbit and lamb chops with a pecorino cheese crust (above left) are served in truly elegant surrounds designed by Jacques Garcia, of Paris' Hôtel Costes fame.

### Come il Latte Gelateria

Don't write this place off as just another gelato bar. Sure, you can find good gelato throughout Rome, but the scoops here are so much more than "good" – one taste of the salted caramel or Sicilian pistachio gelatos, or one of the refreshing seasonal fruit sorbets, and you'll find it hard to go anywhere else. And the milk bottle-lined walls are as worthy of a 'gram as the ice-cream.



### LIVE OUT YOUR FOODIE DREAMS

There could be worse places to land a decent meal, but unearthing the gems among the tourist traps can get a little tricky. This is where to start



### Trattoria da Valentino

Commonly filled with smart Roman couples enjoying leisurely weekend lunches, this trattoria offers warm and friendly service and some of the best food in the city. While the focus of the menu is their famous grilled scamorza (an Italian cheese), you'll find it hard to go past the cacio e pepe – a simple Roman pasta with pecorino and cracked pepper.

### Cul de Sac

Back in the day, a local bar serving a few simple dishes with your wine was called an osteria. Now, the definition has expanded with the menus, but this place stays true to its small-time moniker. If you're feeling brave, order trippa alla romana (aka Roman-style tripe, a specialty), or play it safe with classic pasta amatriciana, washed down with one of the 1,500 wines they have on offer. Considering its proximity to the tourist-laden Piazza Navona, Cul de Sac is a true find.



### AFTERNOON APERITIF

Whet your appetite at one of these local watering holes



### IF YOU WANT TO ESCAPE THE THROGS OF TOURISTS

Cosy up with a Negroni del Professore at The Jerry Thomas Project, a prohibition-style speakeasy that also happens to be one of the best bars in the world.



### IF YOU WANT TO SEE AND BE SEEN

After a visit to the Pantheon, rub shoulders with Rome's in-crowd while sipping Moscow mules at Salotto 42.



### IF YOU WANT A PANORAMA WITH YOUR COCKTAIL

Order an Aperol spritz and watch the sun go down behind the dome of St Peter's Basilica from the rooftop bar at Grand Hotel de la Minerve.

### THE DISHES TO TASTE BEFORE YOU LEAVE

In Italy, each region is defined by its culinary offering. Don't go home without sampling the local fare



#### CARBONARA

An unbelievably light dish with pecorino, egg and guanciale (cured pig cheek) – that is, *not* the creamy stuff you get at home. Casa Coppelle's is the best.



#### FRITTI

Basically, "fried things" – a remnant of the city's strong Jewish influence. Try the fiori di zucca (zucchini flowers) or suppli (mozzarella-stuffed arancini) from local favourite Supplizio.



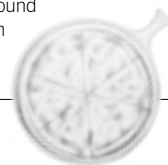
#### PIZZA BIANCA

A basic but delicious offering of olive oil and coarse salt on crusty pizza dough. It's the house specialty at Forno Campo de' Fiori – the line out the door says it all.



#### ESPRESSO

Okay, not really edible but still one of the biggest cultural icons Italy has. Sant'Eustachio il Caffé is a popular pick, but wherever you go, make like the locals and sip standing.



#### THIN-CRUST PIZZA

Prefer the classic crispy and thin Roman crust? Head straight to Pizzeria da Baffetto, located just around the corner from Piazza Navona.

## CULTURE CRUNCH

Rome wasn't built in a day – so you can't see it all in one either. Here's what to prioritise on a short stay

### **Trevi Fountain ▶**

Avoid the crowds and go on your way back from a night out. A little cliché, sure, but thanks to a 17-month restoration, the *Roman Holiday* backdrop is as beautiful as ever.



**ROME AROUND**  
*From walking tours to day trips, these are the treks worth making*

### **A COUPLE OF HOURS**

Throw on your Stan Smiths and make your way to the left bank of the River Tiber to the historic area of Trastevere (literally, "across the Tiber"). Filled with tiny cobblestone streets, umbrella-dotted piazzas and glittering fountains, it's one of Rome's most charming (if a little touristy) neighbourhoods. Skip the Porta Portese flea market and wind your way towards Piazza Santa Maria. A quick look around the basilica and it's time for lunch – a plate of pillowy gnocchi at Dot Bistrot is a safe bet. End your visit with a climb to the Gianicolo hill for a spectacular view back over the city.



### **◀ Pantheon**

Marvel at the mathematical genius of the most influential building in ancient Rome, and you'll forget it was built nearly 2,000 years ago.

### **AN AFTERNOON**

The Roman equivalent of Sydney's Redfern, Pigneto is a suburb that's got plenty of buzz – a neighbourhood where selfie sticks give way to man buns and street art reigns supreme. As gentrification goes, what was once a low-income enclave on the city's fringe is now a multicultural hotbed for local artists and visiting hipsters alike. Before you make the 30-minute journey from the city's centre, book a seat at Cohouse (trust us: no "membership" and you'll be turned away), a warehouse-style bar and restaurant that often plays host to the pop-up Pigneto Food Market.

### **MACRO ▶**

Take a break from the ruins and spend an afternoon contemplating contemporary art, such as the exhibition celebrating the works of Italian artists Marisa and Mario Merz. It also hosts international photography festival Fotografia, due to start later this year.



### **TIP**

Want to minimise time spent waiting? Buy a Roma Pass online before you arrive – it'll send you straight to the front of the queue at two museums of your choice, plus nab you discounts on other events and exhibitions.

[romapass.it](http://romapass.it)



### **◀ Colosseum**

The Colosseum gets up to six million annual visitors, and it's worth joining the queue. The world's largest amphitheatre is a true architectural feat – you'll be stunned at the underground networks where the gladiators and animals were kept before the "show".

### **A DAY TRIP**

When you think of the Italian coast, Cinque Terre or Amalfi no doubt spring to mind. But Ostia Antica? If you've never heard of it, you're not alone, but the harbour city was home to some of ancient Rome's first colonies, and is now a popular seaside destination for modern Romans. Make your way to the hugely underrated ruins – they rival those at Pompeii – and let your mind be boggled at how many thousands of years of history are under your feet. Finish the day with local seafood at La Bussola – you'll revel in the kind of freshness you're hard-pressed to find back in Rome. ◻

## ...and what to miss

### **◀ SPANISH STEPS**

They're really just... stairs. The attached piazza is swarming with selfie-stick sellers and you'll catch better glimpses in the boutique-lined streets nearby.



### **◀ VATICAN MUSEUMS**

If it's on your bucket list but you're on a tight timeline, skip the papal-commissioned art (go to Galleria Borghese instead) and head straight for the Sistine Chapel.

