

CASA MANNI ROMA

The Ultimate Roman Lifestyle Art Experiences

A few days in Rome can offer rich rewards—even if all you do is sample some of the highlights within a short distance of Casa MANNI. You may be passionate about Caravaggio’s paintings or Bramante’s churches, or want to understand Rome’s importance to the enduring meaning of western civilization. Whatever your interests, an art historian can tailor a private tour of Rome’s thousands of years of art and architecture for you.

Those who know and love Rome agree that a lifetime is not enough to see it all, but you can have the most well-rounded understanding of the city’s celebrated history in the arts—from the Middle Ages to the present day—even if you’re only in town for a few days.

Art Experiences are coordinated by Frank Dabell, a specialist in the Italian Renaissance who grew up in Rome (with a British father and French mother). Educated at Oxford University and The Courtauld Institute of Art, London University, he is on the art history faculty of Philadelphia’s Temple University program in Rome. He has been a Fellow of the Metropolitan Museum of Art and lectures throughout Europe and the Mediterranean for the Met and other prominent museums. Frank has published numerous scholarly articles and has contributed to *The Dictionary of Art* (1996), *The Encyclopedia of Sculpture* (2004), and the *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*. Currently he is awaiting publication of the *Catalogue of Italian Paintings in the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston*, which he co-authored, while working on Piero della Francesca (he is on the Italian ministerial committee that will decide on the relocation of Piero’s masterpiece the *Madonna del Parto*).

All visits are tailored to your specifications, with lunch and coffee breaks as needed. They can be done either on foot or with a car and driver or by a combination of walking and taxis. And as for what you see on your tour—well, that is up to you. No matter what your interests—fountains and cafés, churches and their art, baths and aqueducts, sports arenas—you can have a personalized experience. Tours can be tightly focused on one or two museums or churches; they can cover a neighborhood, or take on a theme (such as a particular artist or genre) that spreads throughout the entire city. Whether this is your first or your hundredth trip to Rome, the experts will provide unique insight into the artistic and architectural history of our beautiful city.

Here are a few ideas of destinations and itineraries that may pique your interest. (For tours of ancient Rome, have a look at our Archaeological Experiences.)

The Emperor Hadrian's neighborhood: a stroll around Casa MANNI

An orientation walk will soon make it clear that the heart of Rome, ancient and modern, is right here. Located neatly between the Pantheon (A.D. 125) and the Trevi Fountain (1762), the neighborhood of Casa MANNI offers a feast for the eyes and soul, and can be appreciated in a one- or two-hour stroll as soon as you arrive in Rome.

In less than five minutes we can reach the Pantheon, the most intact ancient building in the world, a triumph of matter and spirit built by the Emperor Hadrian, to whom the ruined temple in the Piazza di Pietra, visible from your doorstep, was dedicated. In the Piazza Colonna stands another great survivor from Roman antiquity, the Column of Marcus Aurelius (c. A.D. 180), and Rome's main north-south thoroughfare, the Corso, was begun in 220 B.C. While the area is astonishing for the range of structures from the ancient past, we would also visit equally remarkable Christian art and architecture in local churches, since the vicinity contains works by Michelangelo, Caravaggio, and Bernini, all in their original settings. Santa Maria sopra Minerva, San Luigi dei Francesi, and the grand Jesuit church of Sant' Ignazio (Saint Ignatius Loyola) are all very close. And while each of these sites deserves in-depth study—you can also visit them in one of our more thematic structured walks—this initial orientation may be considered as an architectural tasting menu.

Even on your first day you can thus follow a time line of history and artistic styles stretching from Classical Antiquity to Gothic, Renaissance, Baroque, and the exuberant Rococo, the latter seen in the Piazza Sant' Ignazio, the façade of Santa Maria Maddalena, and the Trevi Fountain. Of course the length of this walk can be tailored according to your time, energy, and tastes. Conveniently—and especially if you are in less than perfect shape after a long journey—this part of Rome is entirely flat, and none of the sites included here involve any lines or entrance fees (but it may encompass excellent gelato and wine bars).

Icons of the Art and Architecture of Rome

These and others can be visited one by one or several together in a morning or afternoon tour.

St. Peter's Basilica and the Sistine Chapel. These sites are magnificent in ways you can't imagine until you experience them. You'll be taken there at the best time of day, after lunch, when the lighting is truly otherworldly. (Semi-private after-hours tours of the Sistine Chapel can also be arranged.) The Vatican Museums. Unparalleled the world over, they are the first and most important collections of western art to be open to the public. (They are closed Sundays.)

The Pantheon. Its dome is one of the most influential features in the history of architecture. (It's just a two-minute walk from Casa MANNI.) Piazza del Campidoglio and the Capitoline Museums. Rome's city hall stands atop the Capitoline Hill, the center of the Seven Hills, overlooking Michelangelo's graceful piazza. (Just a ten-minute walk from Casa MANNI. The museum is closed Mondays.)

Piazza Colonna. From your windows at Casa MANNI, you'll see the Column of Marcus Aurelius and the Italian Prime Minister's residence, Palazzo Chigi. Let the experts tell you about them at ground level (just across the piazza from Casa MANNI).

Trevi Fountain. The most famous, and for many the most beautiful, of Rome's many splendid fountains, it symbolizes Baroque Rome, *la dolce vita* and every visitor's wish to return. (It's just a three-minute walk from Casa MANNI.)

Some Itineraries for Exploring the Art and History of Rome

These tours work well at any time of the day or evening (even if certain monuments are closed). They

can be as brief as one hour, for an overview, or last the whole morning or afternoon. The exact itinerary will depend on which churches and museums are open at the time of the tour. Private viewings will not always be available.

Angels and Demons: the truth

An illuminating itinerary that includes some of the sites described in the feverish fiction of Dan Brown. How did earlier ages regard angelic and demonic presences, or the Four Elements? The work of Gianlorenzo Bernini will provide vivid examples of these phenomena as you visit Santa Maria del Popolo, Santa Maria della Vittoria, and Piazza Navona, to examine some of the finest figures in Baroque sculpture. You can discover the transitional moment between life and death, and how every Christian hoped for salvation while dreading damnation. Borromini's church of San Carlo alle Quattro Fontane and Bernini's Sant'Andrea al Quirinale can also offer food for thought (as do the contrasting circumstances of these artists' deaths). Further points of reflection can be found in Bernini's angels in Santa Maria delle Fratte and on the Ponte Sant'Angelo (and while near Castel Sant'Angelo the art historian can take you to visit the Church of the Souls in Purgatory and its bizarre little museum of messages from the afterlife). Rejecting secret brotherhoods and excessive symbolism, the art historian will aim to reveal some straightforward truths about the life of the spirit and elemental nature as they were seen in earlier times.

Eternal Angels: making the spirit visible

A lively tour of Roman churches, angel-spotting. Rome has much to offer, in every period, through its paintings and sculptures of angelic figures, ranging from the spirits that accompany the dead in ancient art to the countless cherubs, *putti*, and *spiritelli* present in Renaissance tombs, Baroque ceilings, and street tabernacles. You will follow the evolution of angels in Christian art, their gender and appearance, and their depictions in the *Last Judgment*, as in Cavallini's frescoes of the 1290s in Santa Cecilia in Trastevere (anticipating Michelangelo's treatment of the theme in the Sistine Chapel). The art historian will also select some of the finest instances of angelic figures, such as painted and carved images of Saint Michael the Archangel, who dominates the city from the Castel Sant'Angelo, formerly the tomb of the emperor Hadrian.

The Jewish Ghetto

Although locals may still refer to the neighborhood just west of the Capitoline Hill as "il Ghetto" without prejudice, connotations of past anti-Semitism endure, from the Papal decree of 1555 establishing a residential curfew to the still-living memories of the Fascist Era—periods dramatically evoked in the Jewish Museum of Rome's Central Synagogue, completed in 1904 (which you can visit with an expert in an hourly English-language tour, daily except Friday and Saturday). The still-vibrant community—Europe's oldest Jewish settlement—is also known for its food. Many Romans don't even realize the extent of the Roman Jewish cuisine's contributions to the local food culture. Your itinerary would continue from the Ghetto area across the Ponte Fabricio, Rome's oldest bridge, to the Tiber Island and Trastevere.

To the Top of the Janiculum Hill and Back: Introduction to Rome's Art and History

The fit and active can do this tour on foot; others will probably choose wheels for the uphill stretches.

- Ponte Sisto: a 15th-century pedestrian bridge over the Tiber and perhaps the prettiest of Rome's many bridges. It offers wonderful views of the city.
- Santa Maria in Trastevere: 19 centuries of art in what may be Rome's oldest church

- Villa della Farnesina: Raphael and the Roman Renaissance
- Palazzo Corsini Museum: with works from the 15th to 18th centuries (Fra Angelico, Caravaggio, and art from the private collection of Queen Christina of Sweden)
- The Janiculum: the highest hill in Rome, dating back to the ancient city. It offers the most magnificent views of Rome to be found.
- Paul V's Fountain: a gift to Rome by the Borghese pope, with yet another breathtaking view
- Private viewings: The American Academy in Rome and the Villa Aurelia on the Janiculum
- San Pietro in Montorio: with works by Bernini and Sebastiano del Piombo. Next door is the tiny but perfect memorial known as the "Tempietto" by Bramante, architect of St Peter's.
- Trastevere: Rome's left bank.

Piazza Navona and its Surroundings: The Ancient City Competes with the Baroque

(All within a few minutes' walk of Casa MANNI)

- Palazzo Altemps Museum: a sumptuous setting for a collection of ancient sculptures the world's museums wish they had.
- Piazza Navona: an ancient stadium that became a symbol of the Roman Baroque era when Bernini designed the breathtaking Fountain of Four Rivers sculpture at its center.
- Church of Santa Maria della Pace: an art lover's jewel—Pietro da Cortona was its architect, and the frescoes are by Raphael.
- Sant'Agostino: Raphael, Caravaggio, and more
- Biblioteca Angelica: Europe's first public library
- Church of San Luigi dei Francesi: The world comes here to see the paintings by Caravaggio and Domenichino.
- Pantheon: At 1900 years old, it is one of the two most important buildings in Rome (along with St. Peter's).
- Sant'Ivo alla Sapienza: Borromini's wondrous church
- Santa Maria sopra Minerva: Rome's only Gothic-style church, which contains works by Filippino Lippi, Michelangelo, and Bernini and stands above the remains of an ancient temple.
- Private viewing: a collection of contemporary art in a private Roman home.

Campo de' Fiori and Its Surroundings: Renaissance and Baroque Art and Life

(Less than ten minutes' walk from Casa MANNI)

- Palazzo Massimo (outside): Baldassarre Peruzzi and the Renaissance of Antiquity
- Palazzo della Cancelleria (outside): the first great private residence in Renaissance Rome.
- Church of Sant'Andrea della Valle: the Baroque masterpiece that opera lovers know from

Tosca.

- Barracco Museum: a small, charming museum with jewels of ancient sculpture housed in a Renaissance palazzo, a good place to relax
- Campo de' Fiori: food and fun where public executions once took place.
- Palazzo Spada Gallery: a feast of Borromini and a Baroque cardinal's collection
- Piazza Farnese: It inspired Mies van der Rohe's Seagram building in New York City.
- Via di Monserrato: antiques shops along a dreamy 17th-century street
- Via Giulia: A street out of the ideal city of the Renaissance
- Chiesa Nuova: a magnificent church of the Counter-Reformation, founded by St. Philip Neri, with works by Pietro da Cortona and Rubens.
- Private viewing: a private, art-filled apartment on Piazza dei Ricci

Caravaggio in Rome

Caravaggio was deeply inspired by the works of Michelangelo (the Creation and Last Judgment in the Sistine Chapel) and was himself an inspiration to the great Bernini. Together with the art historian you will retrace the artist's footsteps throughout the historic center of Rome, from Piazza del Popolo to the old Ghetto, from the Villa Borghese to Trastevere. You will see where he and his patrons lived, the churches he knew and decorated, and where the crime that caused him to flee Rome was committed. This tour is best divided over several days. Just going to the Vatican Museums and Sistine Chapel takes at least two hours.

- The Vatican Museums
- San Luigi dei Francesi
- Sant'Agostino
- Santa Maria del Popolo
- The National Museums in Palazzo Barberini and Palazzo Corsini
- Capitoline Museums
- The Doria Pamphilj Gallery
- Casino Ludovisi (subject to permission)
- Borghese Gallery

Thematic Art Tours

The artistic and architectural complexity of Rome and its many layers can be overwhelming. Therefore, many people find that it helps to concentrate on a single theme at a time. Here are some suggestions, though please note that every tour will be personally designed for you and your time constraints (subject to the opening hours of the churches or museums).

Walking Tours of the Art of Rome

Starting from Casa MANNI, here are some ideas for what you can cover on foot in two to three hours:

Churches of Renaissance Rome: Michelangelo, Raphael, and the 15th to 16th Centuries

- Santa Maria sopra Minerva: Filippino Lippi, Michelangelo
- Sant'Agostino: Raphael, Andrea and Jacopo Sansovino
- Santa Maria della Pace and cloister: Bramante and Raphael
- San Pietro in Montorio and its Tempietto: Bramante, Sebastiano del Piombo, Vasari
- Santa Maria del Popolo: Pinturicchio
- Santa Maria in Ara Coeli: Pinturicchio

Baroque Rome: Bernini, Borromini, and the 17th Century

- San Luigi dei Francesi and Sant'Agostino: Caravaggio, Lanfranco, Domenichino
- Sant'Andrea della Valle: Lanfranco, Mattia Preti, and Domenichino
- Sant'Ignazio: Andrea Pozzo's folly
- Sant'Ivo alla Sapienza and Piazza Navona: Borromini and Bernini
- Palazzo Spada: Borromini and a Baroque art collection

The Great Artists

If you want to concentrate on the greatest names in the history of Italian art, you can cover the city with a car and driver. Again, the exact timing and itinerary depends on the opening hours of the museums and churches.

Michelangelo: the Art of Power and the Power of Art

- Vatican Museums, Sistine Chapel
- St. Peter's Basilica, the *Pietà*
- The tomb monument of Pope Julius II and the *Moses*, in the church of San Pietro in Vincoli (Saint Peter in Chains)
- Piazza del Campidoglio
- Church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva

Raphael

- Vatican Museums, the Raphael Rooms
- St. Peter's Basilica
- Church of Sant'Agostino
- Church of Santa Maria della Pace
- Palazzo Barberini National Gallery
- Palazzo Doria Pamphilj Gallery
- Villa Farnesina

Bernini

- St Peter's Basilica
- Borghese Gallery
- Piazza Navona
- Church of Sant'Andrea al Quirinale
- Church of Santa Maria della Vittoria
- Church of San Francesco a Ripa
- Palazzo Doria Pamphilj Gallery

Borromini

- Piazza Navona
- Sant'Ivo alla Sapienza
- Church of San Carlo alle Quattro Fontane
- Palazzo Spada
- Palazzo Falconieri
- Church of San Giovanni dei Fiorentini

Bernini, Borromini, Barberini, and Borghese: The Magical B's of Baroque Rome

- Piazza Navona
- Sant'Ivo alla Sapienza (adjacent to Rome's first university, now the national archive)
- Church of Sant'Andrea al Quirinale
- Church of San Carlo alle Quattro Fontane
- Palazzo Barberini
- Borghese Gallery

Caravaggio

- Vatican Museums
- Borghese Gallery
- Capitoline Museums
- Palazzo Doria Pamphilj Gallery
- Palazzo Corsini National Gallery
- Church of Sant'Agostino
- Church of San Luigi dei Francesi
- Church of Santa Maria del Popolo

Canova

- St. Peter's Basilica

- Vatican Museums
- Borghese Gallery
- Museum Atelier, via del Babuino

Other Thematic Tours

The experts will be happy to assemble tours that are unified by any theme you can dream up. Our suggestions below require a car and driver, as they are comprised of sites scattered throughout Rome.

Christian Rome

The Seven Pilgrimage Churches

- St. Peter's
- St. Mary Major
- St. John in the Lateran, Holy Staircase, Holy of Holies, and the Baptistery
- St. Paul Without the Walls and San Paolo alle Tre Fontane (the three springs where St. Paul was martyred)
- St. Lawrence Without the Walls
- The Holy Cross in Jerusalem
- St. Sebastian and the Catacombs on the Appian Way

The Art of the Mosaic

Pagan Mosaics

- Vatican Museums
- Capitoline Museums
- Borghese Gallery
- Palazzo Massimo alle Terme
- Baths of Caracalla
- Ostia Antica
- National Archaeological Museum of Palestrina

Christian Mosaics

- Churches of Santa Pudenziana and Santa Prassede
- Basilica of St. Mary Major
- Church of St. Agnes Without the Walls and Santa Costanza's mausoleum
- Lateran Baptistery and the Holy of Holies
- Basilica of Santa Maria in Trastevere
- Basilica of St. Lawrence Without the Walls

- Church of Sts. Cosmas and Damian
- Church of St. Sabina
- Church of St. Cecilia
- Church of St. Clement
- St. Peter's Basilica

And more ...

Private visits to great art collections and decorated oratories (by appointment)

- Casino dell'Aurora (Guido Reni fresco) at the Palazzo Pallavicini Rospigliosi
- Palazzo Sacchetti (frescoes of the 1550s by Salviati)
- Palazzo Farnese (the French Embassy; frescoes by Annibale Carracci)
- Palazzo Colonna (grand art collection, including the Princess Isabelle Apartment)
- Oratorio del Gonfalone (16th-century frescoes)
- Oratorio di San Giovanni Decollato (16th-century frescoes)

Visits to temporary exhibitions

- *The Age of Conquest* (Rome's Fascination with Greek Art), Capitoline Museums- Palazzo Caffarelli, until September 5, 2010
- *Leonardo DaVinci: The Genius & His Inventions*, Palazzo della Cancelleria, until April 30, 2011
- *1861: The Birth of Nations in the Great European Painting* (Celebrating the 150th anniversary of the unity of the Italian state with Italian painters' reactions to the newly-formed state in the 18th century; including Borrani, Lega, & Fattori), Scuderie del Quirinale, October 2010- January 2011
- *Van Gogh: Timeless Countrysides & the Modern City*, Complesso del Vittoriano, from October 8 2010

Excursions out of Rome (by car)

- Villa Adriana (magnificent ruins of the 2nd-century villa of the Emperor Hadrian) and Tivoli, Villa d'Este (a Renaissance Cardinal's villa and its celebrated garden fountains)
- Etruscan sites: Cerveteri, Tarquinia
- Renaissance Gardens and Villas: Bomarzo, Villa Lante at Bagnaia