



# Rome & Lazio

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## Best Places to Eat

- L'Asino d'Oro (p132)
- Open Colonna (p133)
- Pizzarium (p136)
- Enoteca Provincia Romana (p126)
- Colline Emiliane (p129)

## Best Places to Stay

- Palm Gallery Hotel (p125)
- Blue Hostel (p123)
- Hotel Sant'Anselmo (p124)
- Arco del Lauro (p124)
- Villa Spalletti Trivelli (p123)

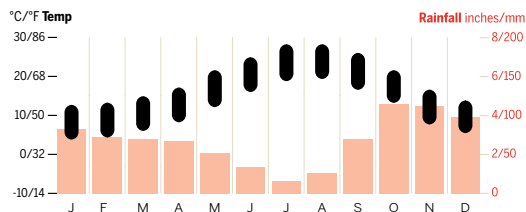
## Why Go?

Even in a country of exquisite cities like Italy, Rome is special. An ancient capital that has triumphed through three thousand years of tumultuous history, it's a beautiful, chaotic sprawl of haunting ruins, monumental basilicas and awe-inspiring art. But while history reverberates all around, modern life is lived to the full – priests in designer shades walk through the Vatican talking into smartphones, scooters scream through medieval alleyways, fashionable drinkers sip *aperitivi* on baroque piazzas. A busy cultural calendar and thriving underground scene ensure there's always something going on.

But for all its appeal, Rome can be exhausting and when it all starts to get too much, it's time to change gear and head out of town. The surrounding, often overlooked Lazio region offers natural beauty and cultural riches ranging from sandy beaches and volcanic islands to ancient ruins, Etruscan tombs and remote hilltop monasteries.

## When to Go

### Rome



**Apr** Sunshine, Easter celebrations, Rome's birthday, and azaleas on the Spanish Steps.

**May–Jul** Rome's festival calendar gets into full swing as summer temperatures soar.

**Sep–Oct** Still warm but the crowds die down and RomaEuropa theatre festival rolls into town.

## Top Roman Sights

With so many world-class monuments, galleries and museums in Rome, it can be difficult to decide which to visit. To help you, here's our selection of must-see sights. The Colosseum is an obvious choice, as are the Vatican Museums – one of the world's great museum complexes and home to the Sistine Chapel. Adjacent to the museums, St Peter's Basilica is the most important church in the Catholic world and a treasure trove of Renaissance and baroque art.

If you like baroque art, you'll love the Museo e Galleria Borghese and Piazza Navona. Not far from the piazza, the Pantheon is the best preserved of Rome's ancient monuments. For the city's finest ancient art check out the Museo Nazionale Romano: Palazzo Massimo alle Terme and the Capitoline Museums on Piazza del Campidoglio. Nearby, ancient ruins lie littered across the atmospheric Palatino (Palatine Hill).

And, of course, to ensure that you return to Rome, be sure to throw a coin into the Trevi Fountain.

### DAY TRIPS FROM ROME

The surrounding Lazio region harbours some exceptional sights, most within easy day-trip distance of the capital. Nearest of all are the beautifully preserved ruins of **Ostia Antica**, ancient Rome's main port town. To the east of Rome, and easily accessible by bus or car, **Tivoli** is home to **Villa Adriana**, the vast summer residence of the emperor Hadrian, and **Villa d'Este**, famed for its fabulous fountains. Slightly further afield, Lazio's Etruscan treasures are quite special. The easiest to get to are in **Cerveteri**, but push on up to **Tarquinia** and you'll be rewarded with some truly amazing frescoed tombs. On Rome's southern doorstep, the charming town of **Frascati** is popular with day-tripping Romans who come to take the hilltop air and taste the local *porchetta* (herb-roasted pork) and white wine.

## Outstanding Works of Art

- Michelangelo's frescoes in the Sistine Chapel are among the world's most famous works of art.
- Raphael's great masterpiece *La Scuola di Atene* (The School of Athens) hangs in the Stanze di Raffaello (Raphael Rooms) in the Vatican Museums.
- Gian Lorenzo Bernini's sculptures at the Museo e Galleria Borghese show a genius at the top of his game.
- Caravaggio's St Matthew cycle in the Chiesa di San Luigi dei Francesi features his signature chiaroscuro (the bold contrast of light and dark) style.

### CATACOMBS

Visit the creepy catacombs on Via Appia Antica to see where Rome's pioneering Christians buried their dead. Hundreds of thousands of tombs line the pitch-black tunnels.

## Best Viewpoints

- Il Vittoriano (p78)
- Dome of St Peter's Basilica (p105)
- Priorato dei Cavalieri di Malta (p 98)
- Gianicolo (p124)

## Lazio's Hidden Gems

- Monastero di San Benedetto (p160), Subiaco
- Palazzo Farnese (p158), Caprarola
- Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Palestrina (p159)
- Civita di Bagnoregio (p158)

## Resources

- **060608** ([www.060608.it](http://www.060608.it)) Rome's official tourist website.
- **Coopculture** ([www.coopculture.it](http://www.coopculture.it)) Information and ticket booking for Rome's monuments.
- **Vatican Museums** (<http://mv.vatican.va>) Book tickets and avoid the queues.
- **Auditorium** ([www.auditorium.com](http://www.auditorium.com)) Check concert listings for the Auditorium Parco della Musica.