

Ancient Rome

COLOSSEUM & PALATINO | THE FORUMS & AROUND

Neighbourhood Top Five

1 Colosseum (p52) Getting your first glimpse of Rome's iconic amphitheatre. The 2000-year-old stadium is both an architectural masterpiece and a stark reminder of the brutality of ancient times.

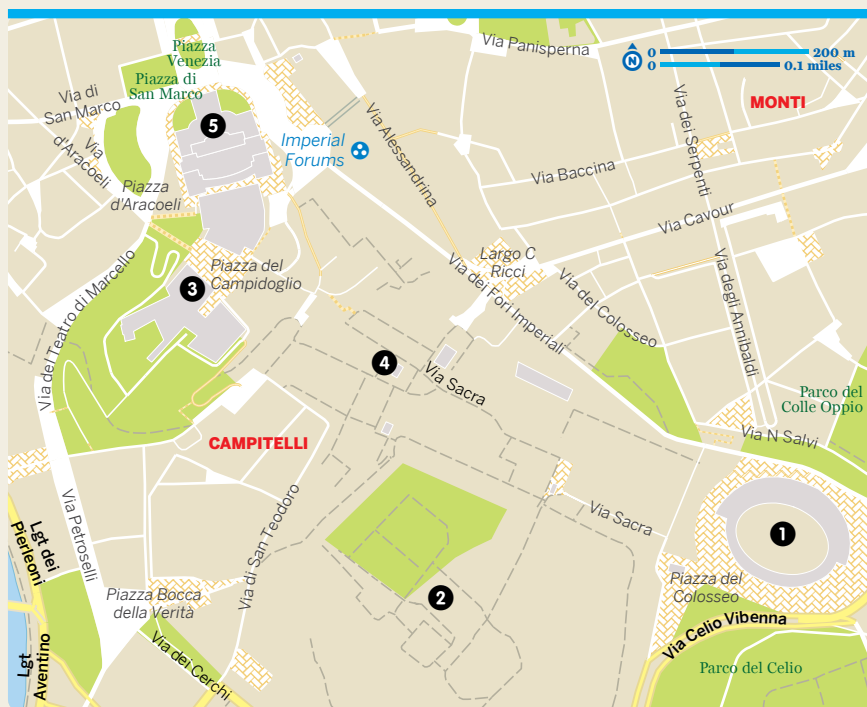
2 Palatino (p54) Exploring the haunting ruins of the Palatine Hill,

ancient Rome's legendary birthplace and, in imperial times, its most exclusive neighbourhood.

3 Capitoline Museums (p61) Going face to face with centuries of awe-inspiring art at the world's oldest public museums.

4 Roman Forum (p57) Discovering the basilicas, temples and triumphal arches of what was once the nerve centre of the vast Roman Empire.

5 Vittoriano (p66) Surveying the city spread out beneath you from atop this colossal marble extravaganza.



For more detail of this area see Map p292 →

Explore: Ancient Rome

Located to the south of the city centre, this area contains the great ruins of the ancient city, all within easy walking distance of each other. The sites start to get crowded mid-morning and throng with tourists until mid- to late afternoon.

The area has two focal points: the Colosseum (p52) to the southeast, and the Campidoglio (Capitoline Hill) to the northwest. In between lie the forums: the Roman Forum (p57) to the left of Via dei Fori Imperiali as you walk up from the Colosseum, the Imperial Forums (p64) to the right. Rising above the Roman Forum is the Palatino (p54), and behind that the grassy expanse of the Circo Massimo (p64). To the northwest of the Circo, you'll find the Bocca della Verità (p67) and a couple of early Roman temples in an area that used to be ancient Rome's cattle market (Forum Boarium).

To explore Ancient Rome, the obvious starting point is the Colosseum, which is easily accessible by metro. From there you could go directly up to the Roman Forum, but if you go first to the Palatino (the Colosseum ticket covers the Palatino and Roman Forum), you'll get some wonderful views over the forums. Once you're done in the Roman Forum head up to Piazza del Campidoglio (p65) and the Capitoline Museums (p61). Nearby, the mammoth white Vittoriano (p66) is hard to miss.

Local Life

➔ **Exhibitions** While tourists clamber all over the Vittoriano, locals head inside to catch an art exhibition at the Complesso del Vittoriano (p66). Accessible from the Forum side of the monument, the gallery hosts an eclectic program of temporary shows.

➔ **Celebrations** Join Romans to celebrate the city's birthday, Natale di Roma, on 21 April. The program varies each year but events are generally held around Via dei Fori Imperiali, the Campidoglio (p65) and the Circo Massimo (p64).

➔ **Via Crucis** Easter is a big deal in Rome. On Good Friday crowds gather at the Colosseum (p52) to witness the pope lead the traditional Via Crucis procession, an event that is broadcast around the world.

Getting There & Away

➔ **Bus** In the northwest of the neighbourhood Piazza Venezia is an important hub. Many services stop in or near here, including bus 40, 64, 87, 170, 916 and H.

➔ **Metro** Metro line B has stations at the Colosseum (Colosseo) and Circo Massimo. If taking the metro at Termini, follow signs for Line B 'direzione Laurentina'.

Lonely Planet's Top Tip

The big sights in this part of Rome are among the city's most visited. To avoid the worst of the crowds try to visit early morning or in the late afternoon, when it's cooler and the light is much better for taking photos. Also, be sure to wear comfy shoes as the ancient Roman cobblestones are murder on the feet and you'll be doing plenty of walking.

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Terre e Domus (p67)
- ➔ Ristorante Roof Garden Circus (p67)
- ➔ San Teo (p67)

For reviews, see p67. ➔

Best Places to Drink

- ➔ 0,75 (p69)
- ➔ Cavour 313 (p69)
- ➔ Terrazza Caffarelli (p69)
- ➔ BrewDog Roma (p69)

For reviews, see p69. ➔

Best Lookouts

- ➔ Vittoriano (p66)
- ➔ Orti Farnesiani, Palatino (p54)
- ➔ Tabularium, Capitoline Museums (p61)
- ➔ Mercati di Traiano Museo dei Fori Imperiali (p65)

For reviews, see p64. ➔