

Monti, Esquilino & San Lorenzo

MONTI | ESQUILINO | PIAZZA DELLA REPUBBLICA & AROUND | SAN LORENZO & BEYOND

Neighbourhood Top Five

- 1 Palazzo Massimo alle Terme** (p138) Time-travelling back to the magnificent frescoed, mosaic-carpeted villas of imperial Rome at one of Rome's finest unsung art museums.
- 2 Monti** (p140) Pottering around Rome's romantic, bohemian-chic neighbour-

hood, lingering at old-world wine bars, sipping coffee on quaint pavement terraces and browsing independent specialist boutiques en route.

- 3 Pigneto** (p148) Hobnobbing with bohos in the iconic working-class district immortalised by film director Pasolini.

- 4 Basilica di Santa Maria Maggiore** (p139) Marveling at the splendours of one of Rome's four patriarchal basilicas.

- 5 Domus Aurea** (p140) Exploring the underground wonders of Nero's great golden palace that lies today beneath Oppian Hill.



For more detail of this area see Map p311 and p312 →

Explore: Monti, Esquilino & San Lorenzo

Allow a full day to explore Esquilino, named after one of Rome's seven hills and embracing the increasingly scrubbed-up mesh of streets around Stazione Termini and Piazza Vittorio Emanuele II (Rome's largest city square), probably best avoided at night. The stunning classical art showcased in the Palazzo Massimo alle Terme (p138) alone warrants two or three hours.

Heading downhill, Monti was the ancient city's notorious Suburra slum – a red-light district and the childhood home of Julius Caesar. A welcome overdose of tasty eateries, shops and *enoteche* (wine bars) lend gentrified Monti bags of charm, a fact that is never more apparent than on weekends when seemingly half of Rome flocks here to shop, drink and eat. Follow suit for a day at least.

East of Termini, the lively student quarter of San Lorenzo, won't appeal to everyone – it was the area most damaged by Allied bombing during WWII and by day it feels hung-over. Plan to visit the beautiful Basilica di San Lorenzo Fuori le Mura (p143) in the late afternoon, followed by dinner in one of San Lorenzo's excellent restaurants. The student nightlife scene kicks in after dark.

Pigneto (p148), a quick tram ride southeast, is the Roman equivalent of London's Dalston. Devote an evening to exploring its ever-burgeoning bars and restaurants enlivened by local artists and boho urbanites.

Local Life

➔ **Coffee hangouts** Every neighbourhood has its own iconic cafe in which to while away an hour or so: try Monti's La Bottega del Caffè (p147); Esquilino's Yellow Bar (p148); San Lorenzo's Gente di San Lorenzo (p150); or Pigneto's Necci dal 1924 (p149).

➔ **Aperitivo** Esquilino's *aperitivo* (pre-dinner drinks) bar has been seriously raised with the opening of Gatsby Café (p148); for wine lovers, Il Sorì (p149) in San Lorenzo is the spot.

Getting There & Away

➔ **Metro** The Cavour metro stop (line B) is most convenient for Monti, while the Termini (lines A and B), Castro Pretorio (line B) and Vittorio Emanuele (line A) stations are useful for Esquilino. The section of Line C that will serve Pigneto is not scheduled for completion until 2020.

➔ **Bus** Termini is the city's main bus hub, connected to places all over the city. Access Monti from buses stopping on Via Nazionale or Via Cavour. San Lorenzo is served by buses 71 and 492; Pigneto is served by buses 81, 810 and 105, and night bus n12.

➔ **Tram** An easy way to access San Lorenzo (tram 3) or Pigneto and Centocelle (trams 5, 14 or 19).

Lonely Planet's Top Tip

Don't neglect to visit the oft-overlooked patriarchal **Basilica di San Lorenzo Fuori le Mura** (p143) – it's starkly beautiful and far from crowded, ensuring a refreshingly serene moment or three.

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Antonello Colonna Open (p146)
- ➔ Panella (p145)
- ➔ Said (p147)
- ➔ Ai Tre Scalini (p144)
- ➔ Mercato Centrale (p145)

For reviews, see p143. ➔

Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Gatsby Café (p148)
- ➔ Il Sorì (p149)
- ➔ La Bottega del Caffè (p147)
- ➔ Spirito (p148)
- ➔ Co.So (p149)
- ➔ Necci dal 1924 (p149)

For reviews, see p147. ➔

Best Works of Art

- ➔ Palazzo Massimo alle Terme (p138)
- ➔ Michelangelo's colossal Moses (p140)
- ➔ Fuga's 13th-century facade mosaics (p139)

For reviews, see p140. ➔