

# San Giovanni & Testaccio

SAN GIOVANNI & THE CELIO | AVENTINO & AROUND | TESTACCIO

## Neighbourhood Top Five

**1 Basilica di San Giovanni in Laterano** (p168) Facing up to the monumental splendour of what was once Rome's most important church. You'll feel very small as you explore the echoing baroque interior of Rome's oldest Christian basilica.

**2 Terme di Caracalla** (p169) Being over-awed by the colossal remnants of this vast baths complex.

**3 Villa del Priorato di Malta** (p171) Looking through the unmarked keyhole to enjoy a magical view of St Peter's dome.

**4 Basilica di San Clemente** (p170) Going underground at this beautiful medieval basilica. Before you go, check the church's glittering 12th-century apse mosaic.

**5 Cimitero Acattolico per gli Stranieri** (p172) Grave-spotting in Rome's non-Catholic cemetery.



For more detail of this area see Map p306 ➔

## Explore: San Giovanni & Testaccio

Extending south of the city centre, this is a large area that rewards a measured approach. To get the best out of it, take it slow and savour the various neighbourhoods. The district can easily be divided into two separate patches: San Giovanni and the Celio; and Aventino and Testaccio. A day in each is more than enough to cover the main sights.

Start off at the landmark Basilica di San Giovanni in Laterano (p168), the focal point of the largely residential San Giovanni neighbourhood. It's easily accessible by metro and quite magnificent, both inside and out. Once you've explored the basilica and surrounding piazza, head down Via di San Giovanni in Laterano towards the Colosseum. Near the bottom, the Basilica di San Clemente (p170) is a fascinating church with some exciting underground ruins. From there, you can walk across to the Celio, the green hill that rises south of the Colosseum. There's not a lot to see, but the graceful Villa Celimontana (p171) park is a great place to escape the crowds. Further south, the towering ruins of the Terme di Caracalla (p169) are a thrilling sight.

To the west, on the banks of the Tiber, the once working-class area of Testaccio is a foodie hotspot with a number of excellent trattorias and a popular nightlife strip. Rising above it, the Aventino hill boasts a number of serene medieval churches and one of Rome's great curiosities – the famous keyhole view of St Peter's dome.

## Local Life

- **Romance** Local Lotharios out to impress their loved ones take them to enjoy the sunset views from the Parco Savello (p171) on the Aventino.
- **Offal** Testaccio is the spiritual home of Roman 'blood-and-guts' cooking. It's not for everyone, but savvy locals head to trattorias such as Da Felice (p173) to indulge.
- **Market food** In recent years, a number of foodie stalls have sprouted at Testaccio's covered market, including the hugely popular Mordi e Vai (p173), and Cups (p173), specialising in fresh soups and sauces.

## Getting There & Away

- **Bus** Useful bus routes include 85 and 87, both of which stop near the Basilica di San Giovanni in Laterano, and 714, which serves San Giovanni and the Terme di Caracalla.
- **Metro** San Giovanni is accessible by metro line A. For Testaccio take line B to Piramide. The Aventino is walkable from Testaccio, and Circo Massimo station (line B).
- **Tram** Number 3 runs from San Giovanni along Viale Aventino, through Testaccio and on to Trastevere.

## Lonely Planet's Top Tip

If you like opera and ballet, check [www.operaroma.it](http://www.operaroma.it) for details of summer performances at the Terme di Caracalla. If contemporary art in a gritty urban setting is more your thing, look out for exhibitions and installations at **MACRO Testaccio** (p172), a gallery space in Rome's former abattoir.

## Best Places to Eat

- Sbanco (p172)
- Trapizzino (p173)
- Aroma (p173)
- Flavio al Velavevodetto (p173)
- Da Felice (p173)
- Pizzeria Da Remo (p173)

For reviews, see p172. ➡

## Best Places to Drink

- Rec 23 (p174)
- Coming Out (p175)
- L'Oasi della Birra (p174)
- Bibenda Wine Concept (p174)
- Anticafé Roma (p174)

For reviews, see p174. ➡

## Best Off-the-Radar Gems

- Villa del Priorato di Malta (p171)
- Cimitero Acattolico per gli Stranieri (p172)
- Chiesa di Santo Stefano Rotondo (p171)
- Basilica dei SS Quattro Coronati (p170)
- Parco Savello (p171)

For reviews, see p170. ➡