

# Monti, Esquilino & San Lorenzo

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

## Neighbourhood Top Five

- 1 Enjoying the splendours of one of Rome's finest yet lesser-known museums, housed in the **Palazzo Massimo Alle Terme** (p128); the highlight being its incredible Ancient Roman frescoes.
- 2 Enjoying a drink in a sun-dappled cafe in the bo-

hemian yet chic neighbourhood of **Monti** (p141).

- 3 Having a night out in **Pigneto** (p142), the iconic working-class district immortalised by Pasolini.

- 4 Wandering around the splendours of **Santa Maria Maggiore** (p129).

- 5 Dining in San Lorenzo, the down-at-heel student zone that harbours some of the capital's trendiest restaurants (p140).



For more detail of this area see Map p340 and Map p339 →

## Explore: Monti, Esquilino & San Lorenzo

Although Esquilino covers a large chunk of east-central Rome, the term is used to describe the scruffy area around Stazione Termini and Piazza Vittorio Emanuele II. Near Termini the Museo Nazionale Romano: Palazzo Massimo alle Terme displays stunning classical art, and the area is dotted with some of Rome's finest medieval churches.

Heading downhill, Monti was the ancient city's notorious Suburra slum – a red-light district and the childhood home of Julius Caesar – but is now a charming neighbourhood of inviting eateries, shops and *enoteche* (wine bars). You could say Monti is Rome's Greenwich Village, and, as if to put the seal on its accelerating gentrification, Woody Allen filmed parts of *The Bop Decameron* here in 2011.

San Lorenzo is a lively student quarter east of Termini, home to a beautiful, little-visited patriarchal basilica. It was the area most damaged by Allied bombing during WWII, ironically given the area's vehemently anti-Fascist politics. By day the area feels hungover, a grid of graffitied streets that nonetheless harbour some gemlike boutiques, but after dark it shows its true colours as a student night-life haunt; it's also home to some excellent restaurants.

A quick tram ride southeast, Pigneto is even more bohemian, the Roman equivalent of London's Shoreditch. House prices are rising and its bars and funky offbeat shops attract a regular crowd of artists and fashion-conscious urbanites.

### Local Life

- ➔ **Hangouts** While away an hour or more at the Bottega del Caffè (p141) in Monti, watching the world go by.
- ➔ **Shopping** Find exotic spices and foodstuffs at the Nuovo Mercato Esquilino, Rome's most eclectic food market, next to Piazza Vittorio Emanuele.
- ➔ **Dining** Make like a tortured artist while noshing on classic Roman dishes, hobnobbing with Rome's arty and media set at Pastificio (p140), San Lorenzo.

### Getting There & Away

- ➔ **Metro** Cavour Metro stop is most convenient for Monti, while Termini, Castro Pretorio and Vittorio Emanuele stations are useful for Esquilino.
- ➔ **Bus** Termini is the city's main bus hub, connected to places all over the city; Monti is accessible by buses stopping on Via Nazionale or Via Cavour. San Lorenzo (buses 71, 140 and 492) and Pigneto (buses 81, 810 and 105, and night bus n12) are best reached by bus or tram.
- ➔ **Tram** This is an easy way to access San Lorenzo (tram 3) or Pigneto (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 (p134). It's starkly beautiful.

### Best Places to Eat

- ➔ L'Asino d'Oro (p135)
- ➔ Trattoria Monti (p138)
- ➔ Agata e Romeo (p138)
- ➔ Open Colonna (p139)
- ➔ Panella l'Arte del Pane (p138)

For reviews see p135 ➔

### Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Tre Scalini (p141)
- ➔ Bottega del Caffè (p141)
- ➔ Il Tiaso (p142)
- ➔ Vini e Olii (p142)

For reviews see p141 ➔

### Best Works of Art

- ➔ Frescoes at Palazzo Massimo alle Terme (p128)
- ➔ Michelangelo's colossal Moses (p130)
- ➔ Fuga's 13th-century facade mosaics (p129)
- ➔ Richard Meier's modernist Chiesa Dio Padre Misericordioso (p135)

For reviews see p131 ➔