

# Ancient Rome

COLOSSEUM | PALATINO | THE FORUMS | CAMPIDOGLIO | PIAZZA VENEZIA | FORUM BOARIUM

## Neighbourhood Top Five

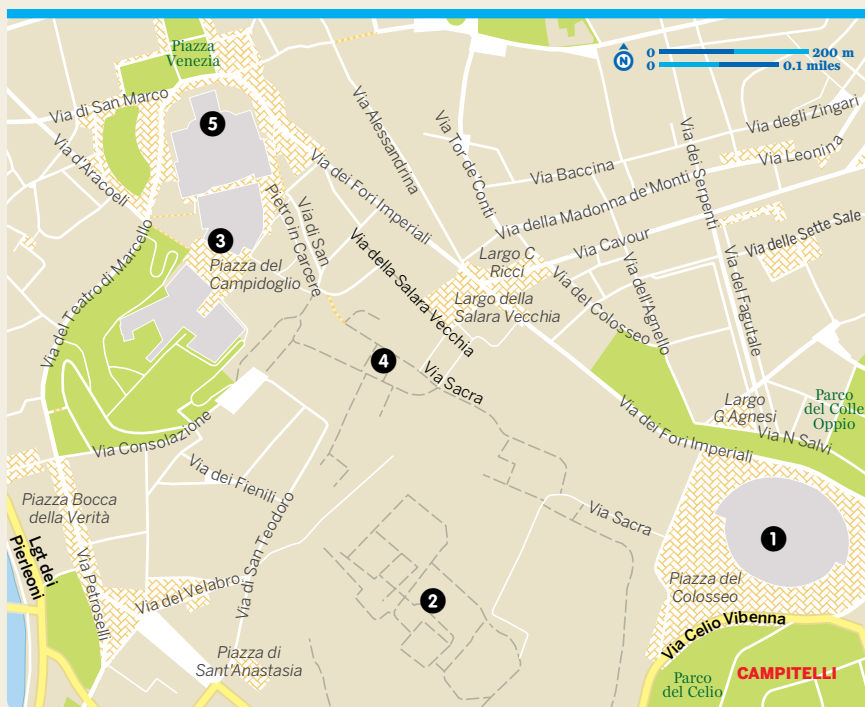
**1** Getting your first glimpse of the **Colosseum** (p62). Rome's towering gladiatorial amphitheatre is an architectural masterpiece, the blueprint for many modern stadiums and a stark, spine-tingling reminder of the brutality of ancient times.

**2** Exploring the haunting ruins of the **Palatino** (p64), ancient Rome's most exclusive neighbourhood.

**3** Coming face to face with centuries of awe-inspiring art at the historic **Capitoline Museums** (p71).

**4** Walking up Via Sacra, the once grand thoroughfare of the **Roman Forum** (p67).

**5** Surveying the city spread out beneath you from atop **Il Vittoriano** (p76).



For more detail of this area, see Map p356 →

## Explore: Ancient Rome

Located to the south of the city centre, this area contains the great ruins of the ancient city, all concentrated within walking distance of each other. They start to get crowded mid-morning and thronged with tourists until mid- to late afternoon, although in peak season they can be busy all day. Apart from the big sights, which you can comfortably cover in a couple of days, there's little in the way of nightlife or after-hours action.

The area has two focal points: the Colosseum to the east and the Campidoglio (Capitoline Hill) to the west. In between lie the forums: the more famous Roman Forum on the left of Via dei Fori Imperiali as you walk up from the Colosseum, and the Imperial Forums on the right. Rising above the Roman Forum is the Palatino, and behind that the Circo Massimo. Continuing north-west from the Circo Massimo brings you to the Forum Boarium, ancient Rome's cattle market and river port, where you'll find the Bocca della Verità, Rome's mythical lie detector.

To explore the area, the obvious starting point is the Colosseum, which is easily accessible by metro. From here you could go directly up to the Roman Forum, but if you go first to the Palatino (your Colosseum ticket covers the Palatino and Roman Forum) you'll get some wonderful views over the forums. From the Palatino enter the Forum and work your way up to Piazza del Campidoglio and the Capitoline Museums. Nearby, the mammoth white Vittoriano is difficult to miss.

## Local Life

- ➔ **Exhibitions** While tourists climb all over Il Vittoriano, locals head inside to catch an exhibition at the Complesso del Vittoriano (p76).
- ➔ **Celebrations** Join Romans to celebrate the city's birthday, the Natale di Roma, on 21 April. Events and historical re-enactments are held in and around Rome's ancient sights.
- ➔ **Jogging** Don your trainers and run with the Romans on the Circo Massimo (p74), a popular jogging venue.

## Getting There & Away

- ➔ **Bus** Frequent buses head to Piazza Venezia, including numbers 40, 64, 87, 170, 492, 916 and H.
- ➔ **Metro** Metro line B has stops at the Colosseum (Colosseo) and Circo Massimo. 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.

Bring bottled water and eats with you as the bars and snack trucks on Via dei Fori Imperiali are a real rip-off.

## Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Enoteca Provincia Romana (p78)
  - ➔ Cristalli di Zucchero (p78)
  - ➔ Hostaria da Nerone (p78)
- For reviews, see p78 ➔

## Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Cavour 313 (p79)
  - ➔ Caffè Capitolino (p79)
  - ➔ 0,75 (p79)
- For reviews, see p79 ➔

## Best Lookouts

- ➔ Il Vittoriano (p76)
- ➔ Orti Farnesiani, Palatino (p64)
- ➔ Tabularium, Capitoline Museums (p71)
- ➔ Cordonata, Piazza del Campidoglio (p75)

For reviews, see p62 ➔