

Centro Storico

PANTHEON | PIAZZA NAVONA | CAMPO DE' FIORI | JEWISH GHETTO | ISOLA TIBERINA | PIAZZA COLONNA



Neighbourhood Top Five

- 1 Stepping into the **Pantheon** (p82) and feeling the same sense of awe that the ancients must have felt 2000 years ago. The sight of the dome soaring up above you is a genuinely jaw-dropping spectacle.
- 2 Exploring **Piazza Navona** (p84) and the picturesque streets that surround it.
- 3 Browsing the fabulous art collection at the **Palazzo e Galleria Doria Pamphilj** (p94).
- 4 Catching three Caravaggio masterpieces at the **Chiesa di San Luigi dei Francesi** (p86).
- 5 Escaping the crowds in the shadowy lanes of the **Jewish Ghetto** (p92).

For more detail of this area, see Map p360 and p362 →

Explore: Centro Storico

Rome's *centro storico* (historic centre) is made for leisurely strolling and although you could spend weeks exploring its every corner, you can cover most of the main sights in two or three days. Many people enter the area by bus, getting off at Largo di Torre Argentina, from where it's a short walk up to the Pantheon and beyond that to Rome's political nerve-centre Piazza Colonna. Nearby, on Via del Corso, the Palazzo e Galleria Doria Pamphilj houses one of the capital's finest private art collections. Art is thick on the ground in these parts and many of the centre's churches harbour extraordinary frescoes and sculptures. To the west of the Pantheon, the streets around Piazza Navona, itself one of Rome's great must-see sights, are a magnet for tourists and hip Romans with their bohemian boutiques, cool bars and popular pizzerias.

Over on the other side of Corso Vittorio Emanuele II, the main road that bisects the area, all streets lead to Campo de' Fiori, home to a colourful daily market and hectic late-night drinking scene. From 'il Campo' you can shop your way down to the medieval Jewish Ghetto, a wonderfully atmospheric area of romantic corners, hidden piazzas and authentic eateries.

Local Life

- ➔ **Piazas** The restaurants on Piazza Navona and Piazza Rotonda attract a touristy crowd while Campo de' Fiori pulls in boozing students. Locals head to places in the quieter back streets.
- ➔ **Shopping Strips** Browse retro fashions and second-hand threads on Via del Governo Vecchio; Via dei Giubbonari is good for frocks and heels.
- ➔ **Aperitif** Young Romans love to meet over an evening *aperitivo* in the bars around Piazza Navona.

Getting There & Away

- ➔ **Bus** The best way to access the *centro storico*. A whole fleet serves the area from Termini, including Nos 40 and 64, which both stop at Largo di Torre Argentina and continue down Corso Vittorio Emanuele II. From Barberini metro station, bus 116 stops at Corso del Rinascimento (for Piazza Navona), Piazza Farnese and Via Giulia.
- ➔ **Metro** There are no metro stations in the neighbourhood but it's within walking distance of Barberini, Spagna and Flaminio stations, all on line A.
- ➔ **Tram** No 8 connects Largo di Torre Argentina with Trastevere.

Lonely Planet's Top Tip

The *centro storico* is the perfect area to ditch your guidebook and go it alone. You'll probably get lost at some point, but don't worry if you do – sooner or later you'll emerge on a main road or find a recognisable landmark.

See masterpieces by the likes of Michelangelo, Raphael, Caravaggio and Bernini for absolutely nothing by visiting the area's churches, which are all free to enter.

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Casa Coppelle (p98)
- ➔ Ditirambo (p101)
- ➔ La Rosetta (p98)
- ➔ Forno Roscioli (p100)
- ➔ Armando al Pantheon (p98)

For reviews, see p97 ➔

Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Caffè Sant'Eustachio (p103)
- ➔ Barnum Cafe (p104)
- ➔ Open Baladin (p104)
- ➔ Salotto 42 (p105)

For reviews, see p103 ➔

Best Art Churches

- ➔ Chiesa di San Luigi dei Francesi (p86)
- ➔ Chiesa del Gesù (p93)
- ➔ Chiesa di Sant'Ignazio di Loyola (p97)
- ➔ Chiesa di Santa Maria Sopra Minerva (p85)

For reviews, see p85 ➔