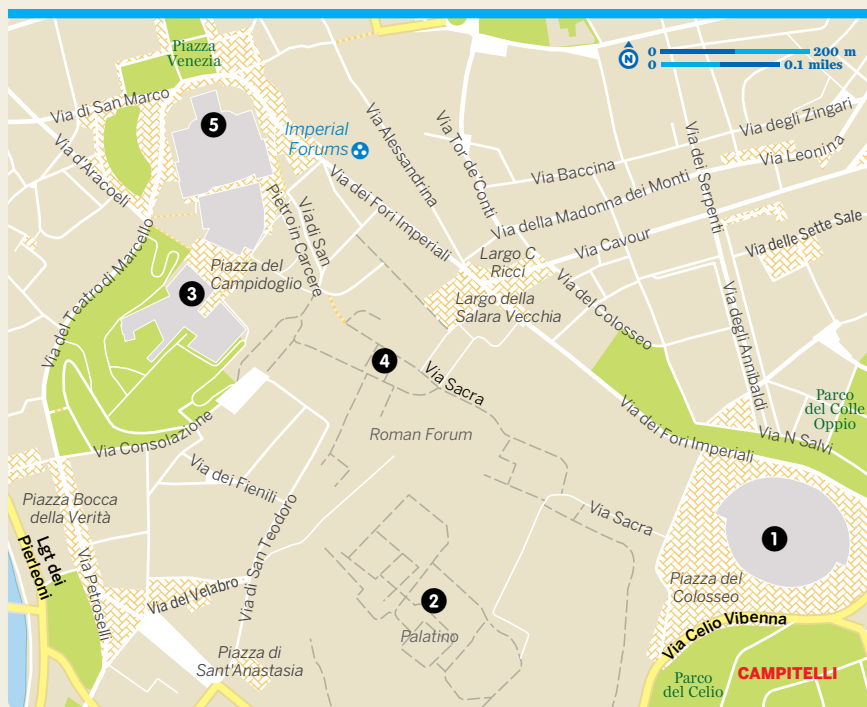


# Ancient Rome

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

## Neighbourhood Top Five

- Getting your first glimpse of the **Colosseum** (p52). Rome's iconic amphitheatre is both an architectural masterpiece and a stark, spine-tingling reminder of the brutality of ancient times.
- Roaming the haunting ruins of the **Palatino** (p106), ancient Rome's birthplace and most exclusive neighbourhood.
- Coming face to face with centuries of awe-inspiring art at the historic **Capitoline Museums** (p61).
- Exploring the basilicas, temples and triumphal arches of the **Roman Forum** (p57).
- Surveying the city spread out beneath you from atop **Il Vittoriano** (p66).



For more detail of this area see Map p300 →

## Explore: Ancient Rome

Located to the south of the city centre, this area contains the great ruins of the ancient city, all within walking distance of each other. They start to get crowded mid-morning and throng 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 southeast, and the Campidoglio (Capitoline Hill) to the northwest. In between lie the forums: the Roman Forum to the left of Via dei Fori Imperiali as you walk up from the Colosseum, the Imperial Forums to the right. Rising above the Roman Forum is the Palatino, and behind that the grassy expanse of the Circo Massimo. To the northwest of the Circo, you'll find the Bocca della Verità and a couple of early Roman temples in an area that used to be ancient Rome's cattle market (Forum Boarium).

To explore ancient Rome, the obvious starting point is the Colosseum, which is easily accessible by metro. From there 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 hard to miss.

## Local Life

➔ **Exhibitions** While tourists climb all over Il Vittoriano, locals head inside to catch an exhibition at the Complesso del Vittoriano (p66).

➔ **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.

➔ **Via Crucis** Crowds gather at the Colosseum (p52) every Good Friday to witness the pope lead the traditional Via Crucis procession.

➔ **Jogging** Don your trainers and run with the Romans on the Circo Massimo (p64), a popular jogging venue.

## Getting There & Away

➔ **Bus** Many buses stop in or near 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 snacks with you as the bars and snack trucks around the main monuments are a real rip-off.

## Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Terre e Domus (p67)
- ➔ San Teo (p67)
- ➔ Ristorante Roof Garden Circus (p67)

For reviews, see p67. ➔

## Best Places to Drink

- ➔ 0,75 (p69)
- ➔ Caffè Capitolino (p69)
- ➔ Cavour 313 (p69)

For reviews, see p69. ➔

## Best Lookouts

- ➔ Il Vittoriano (p66)
- ➔ Orti Farnesiani, Palatino (p106)
- ➔ Tabularium, Capitoline Museums (p61)
- ➔ Mercati di Traiano Museo dei Fori Imperiali (p65)

For reviews, see p64. ➔