Walking Tour: Centro Storico Piazzas

Rome’s historic centre boasts some of the city’s most celebrated piazzas, and several lovely but lesser-known squares. Each has its own character but together they encapsulate much of the city’s beauty, history and drama.

Start Piazza Colonna
Distance 1.5km
Duration 2½ to three hours

1 Piazza Colonna is dominated by the 30m-high Colonna di Marco Aurelio and flanked by Palazzo Chigi, the official residence of the Italian prime minister.

2 Follow Via dei Bergamaschi to Piazza di Pietra, a refined space overlooked by the 2nd-century Tempio di Adriano.

3 Continue down Via de’ Burro to Piazza di Sant’Ignazio Loyola, a small rococo piazza whose resident church boasts magnificent trompe l’œil frescoes.

4 It’s a short walk along Via del Seminario to Piazza della Rotonda, where the Pantheon needs no introduction.

5 Piazza Navona is Rome’s great showpiece square, where you can compare the two giants of Roman baroque – Gian Lorenzo Bernini and Francesco Borromini.

6 On the other side of Corso Vittorio Emanuele II, Campo de’ Fiori hosts a noisy market and boisterous drinking scene.

7 Just beyond the Campo, the more sober Piazza Farnese is overshadowed by the austere facade of the Renaissance Palazzo Farnese.

Take a Break... Those in the know head to Forno di Campo de’ Fiori (www.fornocampodefiori.com) for some of Rome’s best pizza bianca (‘white’ pizza with olive oil and salt).