

Know what that historical thing is that you're about to take a picture of

Rome and Florence



Ciao,

Welcome to Italy! It's time to dig a little deeper into understanding what gives Italy its quality today. You must admit, the feeling you get from your interactions with people here is different than wherever it is you're coming from. By understanding a bit more of Italy's historical genome, you'll be able to dissect and understand the present day, not just in Italy, but all over the world, as so much of this country's history has impacted western civilization. So explore again the places you may have seen, get ready to put on your walking shoes for treading new territory, and update your reading glasses, as you are about to find out what that old thing is that you are about to take a picture of. I hope you find this guide book informative and entertaining. It's impossible to not get overwhelmed by the vast amount of historical somethings you'll see at every twist and turn, so absorb and be picky, I look forward to showing you my favorite bits!

Grazie,
Anna Brezhneva

Tuesday, July 7, 2015.

Experience Ancient Rome: Board Games and Mythology.

If you're visiting Rome in July, be prepared for wandering through the hot, humid streets, sticky with eagerness and hungry to discover the next piece of the Ancient world. You'll be thankful for the invention of air conditioning and bottled water. Wherever it may be that you're coming from, find your way through Rome's twirling streets to the Imperial Fora, situated next to the Colosseum, and enter Ancient Rome. When Constantine came to power as the first Christian Emperor (306 AD), many of the Roman monuments were replaced by Christian churches, today only leaving parts of the original Fora to help in the imaginative process of what the restoration would look like. The awesome size of these structures, along with rich red and yellow colors used, reflecting the colors of the Army uniform at the time, drew many to the square. Here, men would gather for public speeches, elections, criminal trials, and commemorations through marble of great men. It is also the place from which the proverb was born that *All roads lead to Rome*. While waiting for important announcements or events, Romans would gather and play board games. Archeologists have found game-board like holes and rocks that would be played similarly, I imagine, to today's Mancala. The Ancient Roman game is accessible for the price of an entry fee into the Imperial Fora (€12, below, left), or you can opt for the modern Mancala, available on Amazon for \$19.99 (below, right).



In one corner of the Forum, we find the temple of Vesta alongside the Cassa Delle Vestali, the house of the Vestal Virgins, one of Rome's oldest cults. It was an honor to be a Vestal Virgin, to enter a 30-year chastity contract, and to protect the flame of the Goddess Vesta, the goddess of hearth, known to

protect and bring fire to people's homes. Unfortunately, many of the chastity contracts were broken, and as punishment the women were buried alive. Today, by the gardens of the Vestal Virgins we can see the statues that were erected in their honor. The Vestal Virgins were disbanded in 394 AD when the Christian Emperor Theodosius I prohibited the continuation of worship of pagan gods and closed schools and temples. The flame of Vesta had been burning for over a thousand years in Rome, and was finally extinguished.

Wednesday, July 8, 2015.

Three-layers of history in one Church.

"Rome is a lasagna, it has many layers." —Italian tour guide

This is especially true of the Basilica of San Clemente, a building made up of three levels, serving three courses of history. The lowest story, was originally a Roman home of a nobleman, a Mithras cult follower, whose home was likely destroyed in the fire of 64 AD. It was built on the foundations of the Roman Republic. All temples for Mithras were built as underground caves, and you can see the remains of this pagan temple within this dungeon-like structure. The cult was all male, and there is not much ancient literature left to explain the history of the mysterious following. In 395 AD, Mithraism was outlawed, as were other pagan religions. After the fire of 64 AD, many of the burned out buildings were filled-in and used as new foundations for new structures. The freshly formed level was similar in elevation to the Colosseum, which you'll find nearby, just a short walk away.

Making your way upstairs to the middle layer of the religious lasagna, you might notice restored pieces of frescos and early Medieval wall paintings—these were part of a church that was built in the 4th century AD to honor Pope Clement I, who is considered to be the first Apostolic Father of the Church. The paintings make up the second largest collection in Rome of medieval style painting. There is not a clear reason why this second-layer basilica ceased to exist, some argue there was a fire, although no fire evidence exists, while others conclude the basilica was filled in.

Today, the Basilica of San Clemente, built in 1100 AD, during the peak of the Middle Ages, claims the upper, ground level. The mosaics and frescos that are found inside the Basilica date to 1719 AD. Look beneath your feet at the brilliant Cosmati floors. This technique was typical of the Medieval style period in Italy and originated from the Byzantine Empire. Geometric shapes outline the patterns in a typical Cosmatesque piece. Your emotions will be triggered by the masterpieces inside this basilica, and the admission fee will allow you to explore the bottom two layers to gain an understanding of the depth of Roman history.

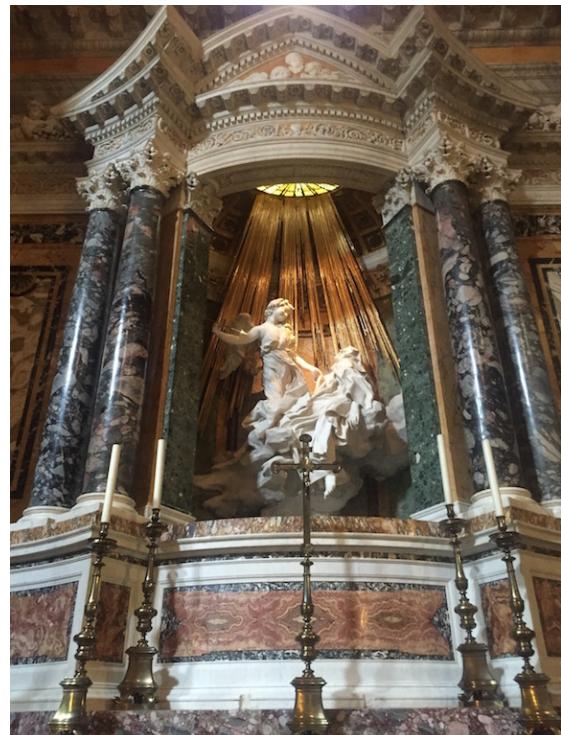
Thursday, July 9, 2015.

Bernini goes Baroque.

“The Baroque is when you *can* draw a straight line but choose instead to draw a curve. The Baroque is when you are bored with the melody and wish to listen to the variations.” — Luigi Barzini

Making our way through history, skipping the Renaissance, we find ourselves in the Baroque time period (1600-1750). The art pendulum swings and brings us back to a romantic period in art, its recent relative being the Middle Ages. Baroque however hits the extremes and this is evident in the show of theatricality of any Baroque church. Whereas

Renaissance pieces are more passive, Baroque art places the action in front of the viewer at its most pivotal moment. One of the most renowned Baroque artists was Gianlorenzo Bernini. His *Ecstasy of St. Teresa* (right) can be found inside Santa Maria della Vittoria. If you pay 50 euro cents you can switch the light to truly appreciate the light coming down on St. Teresa. The combination of her hanging, noticeably limp foot and the expression on her face depict an orgasm, a complete surrender to God. This intense sexual release is drawn so beautifully out of marble that Bernini succeeds in obtaining an emotional reaction from any viewer. The angel strikes St. Teresa with a spear as she is in ecstasy from seeing God. St. Teresa describes feeling intense sweetness from the pain brought on by the angel.



The other decoration within the Santa Maria is theatrical; upon your first steps inside, the intensity of action and color will spark your senses, and may send you into overload. Perhaps this is why initially the term Baroque was derogatory, and many French visitors believed that the artists had no taste. But, the religious goal was to invite the viewer into the piece, and that was done through playing on emotion and using reliefs, a sculpture method to raise certain elements off their background. Baroque art became the Church’s propaganda. At its initial use the goal was to bring back people into the Catholic church as part of the Counter-Reformation. In the music associated with the Baroque we find parallels to

the art work. Dissonance in music paralleled ornamentation in art, both used to evoke emotion. Within the Sant'Agnese in Agone, a 17th century Baroque church in Rome, Baroque music concerts are offered to visitors, but tickets should be bought in advance. The music is eccentric, following fast and complicated themes, driving rhythms. As the church closes to the public, sit and enjoy this musical performance whilst studying the Baroque depictions of the death of four different saints, and the other artwork present throughout the church. It is certain to be an intoxicating experience. Baroque artists wanted to understand and depict the human psyche in order to produce emotional connection to art. Not all had the purpose of bringing viewers to the Church, many had no ties to it, but at its invention, the Church was largely involved.

Friday, July 10, 2015.

Pope-arazzi.

Michelangelo's *The Last Judgement* breaks all expectations. We are introduced to this famous Renaissance artist within the walls of the Sistine Chapel, tucked inside Vatican City. The chapel has its name as it was commissioned by Pope Sixtus. This is where the College of Cardinals gather in this era to select the next pope. Michelangelo was initially commissioned to paint a fresco of the ten apostles on the Chapel's altar wall, but decided to break with the continuity of the other walls and paint a masterpiece that stands on its own. Christ is shown in the middle, with the blessed on his right, and the damned to his left. Angels are depicted as male, powerful, and muscular, without wings, helping those that are blessed rise from their graves, and blowing golden trumpets to awake the dead. The saints are painted without halos. By portraying the physicality of those that are being risen into heaven with the assistance of angels, we see the struggle of the journey clearly, brilliantly illustrated by Michelangelo. He gained inspiration for brute masculinity after visiting Orvietto, a small town where today you can find frescos with figures of similar style. On the opposite side, we see the damned



being pushed and shoved into hell by both demons and angels, the damned struggling to escape from the grips of hell. In this work, Michelangelo ignores the traditions of the High Renaissance, which valued accurate representations of the human body, and distorts his figures to add power to the painting. At the time of its completion in 1541, Michelangelo was criticized for showing figures in full nudity. After his death, genitalia was covered with fresh layers of paint. When accepting his role for the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, Michelangelo was hesitant as he insisted that he did not have much practice with painting, and was rather more fond of his own sculpture. It took him six years to complete the ceiling, and after twenty years of producing other work, he took four years to complete *The Last Judgement*. The representation of bodies were his truth, and he questioned his faith many times during these years. Most of what you see today, amazingly, looks the same as it did when Michelangelo finally stepped out of the Chapel.

Saturday, July 11, 2015.

Beautiful, old Tivoli.

Enchanting and quaint Tivoli is reachable by metro to Tibertina Station plus another 45-minute train ride from Rome. You could also take the metro to the Ponte Mamolo and catch a 45-minute bus to Tivoli—but don't forget to pick up a bus ticket at the Tabucchi in the train station (marked by a large blue T). It houses one of Italy's finest examples of Renaissance culture, the Villa d'Este. The fountains and gardens behind the walls of the villa are awe-inspiring and magnificent, transcending your senses to a new state. The idea to create within this place was initially presented by Cardinal Ippolito II d'Este, when he arrived in Tivoli as its new governor on September 9, 1550. D'este hired architects to build his vision and created such gardens that the structures inspired and set a trend for all of Europe. In 1572, Cardinal Ippolito II d'Este passed away, with much of the work needed to be done left incomplete. The property was inherited by his nephew, Cardinal Luigi d'Este, but he had only enough money to complete the projects that had already been initiated. The property was then turned over to the Dean of the Holy College of Cardinals, only to come back to the d'Este family in the early 17th century. Restoration and decoration were continued, largely under the supervision of the Dukes of Modena. A whirlwind of historical events passed, consisting of the villa being passed to different families, abandoned, eventually passed to the Hapsburgs in 1803, worsening the state of the property, and finally rescued by Cardinal Gustav von Hohenlohe. Both Hapsburgs and Cardinal Gustav were Holy Roman Empire aristocrats. In 1920, the Villa d'Este became part of the Italian State, and was largely reconstructed during a campaign from 1920-1930, only to be bombed during World War II, and restored again. The magnificent gardens

and fountains that we see today, are therefore a miracle given the history that flows into all corners of the villa. The musicality and theatricality of the villa are a sight to be experienced, and it is no surprise that Bernini played a role in this reminiscently Baroque meets Renaissance landscaping in his Fountain of the Bicchierone (large drinking glass) in the years 1660-1661.

Tuesday, July 14, 2015.

Aria-vederci. A Night at the Opera.

Most tourists will come to Italy to escape their nine-to-five jobs, but, rethink work and consider about saying “yes” to a different type of work—the opera! *Opera* in Italian means “work,” and its debut was at a Medici family wedding when Maria Medici wed King Henry IV of France in October 1600. The opera performed at the wedding celebrations was Jacopo Peri’s *Euridice*. If there’s any *cognome* you should remember for a visit to Florence, Medici is it. This Florentine family was extremely wealthy, they started banking by giving loans to people of Florence and began controlling much of the wool industry; due to their wealth they became massively influential. The Medici commissioned many great Renaissance artists and it is very likely that without them the Renaissance as we study and see it today would not have happened to the same degree without the Medici family.

During the summer months, splurge on a quality seat ticket to the opera at the Baths of Caracalla. These ancient Roman ruins now serve as the foundation and stage for the Rome Opera company. Opera’s original intent was to retell Greek or Roman mythology or Ancient Roman History, these Baroque operas were called *opera seria*; in its beginnings opera only included a few instrumentalists. Today, we see a lively orchestra that accompanies actors on stage. *Madama Butterfly* is one of the operas you might have the chance to see, and it is brilliantly entertaining with its humor, sadness, lively music, and modern interpretation. The opera was written by Giacomo Puccini in 1903. Puccini has a reputation for poignant, melodramatic music with melodies that are authentically Japanese. *Madame Butterfly* centers around a United States Lieutenant and a Japanese woman. The two fall in love, but after their wedding, Madama Butterfly, our tragic heroine, is shunned away by her family for marrying an American. Pinkerton, the new destructive, husband, has to leave to return to America and leaves Butterfly alone with her maid, promising that one day he shall return. Three years later, he finds out she had his child, so he returns with a new wife to take the child away, unable to bear facing Butterfly alone. Seeing that she has lost everything, Butterfly ends her life. *Madama Butterfly* is a terrific example of Opera. The orchestra is a “full” orchestra complete with English horn, a full array of French horns, harp and all of the string instruments began by the Italian master, Stradivarius in the 17th century. The Baths of Caracalla, Ancient

Roman ruins by day, reflect the creative stage lighting, and serve as a beautiful backbone to the piece. The ruins allow the backdrop buildings to change as the story changes, matching the mood of Madama Butterfly with the quality of the buildings shown. Other entertaining elements are included on set, at one point a taxi cab drives up on stage to drop off a character!

Wednesday, July 15, 2015.

Falling for Firenze.

Florence, or *Firenze*, is noticeably smaller than the city of Rome; its streets buzz with the conversations of intellectuals, and you'll find many art studios tucked away in small alleyways. Turn a corner, and you'll spot a historical Renaissance building, likely made of beautiful green, white, and pink marble. If you've stumbled on this, remember the name *Duomo* (Cathedral). There's nothing quite like this architecture in Rome. To truly appreciate the beauty of Florence, put on your best, comfortable, walking shoes and head to Piazzale Michelangelo. The walk will be steep with many steps, but bring a cold beverage, or a bottle of fine Italian wine, to enjoy at the top of the steps as you gaze at Florence from the top.

Built in 1869, this piazzale was designed by Giuseppe Poggi as part of the redevelopment of the south side of the river, and was meant to house a museum of various Michelangelo works. It is home to a copy of Michelangelo's *David*, made of bronze unlike the original white marble. Like many of Michelangelo's works, you'll find the original *David* in Florence, in Galleria dell'Accademia. From the piazzale, you'll see that River Arno divides Florence into two. Most of the shopping, museums, and highlights of Florence are located on the North side of the river, but this piazzale offers a unique panoramic view of Florence that's been photographed and rephotographed by tourists and post card sellers.

Look over the river and you'll notice a famous bridge, you may have crossed it in order to get here. The bridge sticks out with its many bustling shops and eager tourists, it is called *Ponte Vecchio*. It is believed that the bridge was first built in Roman times; the first documentation of it appears in 996 AD, but since then it has been reconstructed many times due to damage. On the bridge, you'll find a bust of Benvenuto Cellini, a famous goldsmith and true Renaissance Man. From this high point, you'll also notice, not too far from Ponte Vecchio, *The Duomo*, part of the Cathedral of Saint Mary of the Flower (*Cattedrale di Santa Maria del Fiore*). On a later page, you'll get a chance to learn more about the special history of the cathedral.

Thursday, July 16, 2015.

Stuck with Michelangelo.

Put down the remote, turn off the *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, and realize that these four ninjas were named after four incredible Renaissance artists. Michelangelo di Lodovico Buonarroti Simoni is one of the four. In Florence, inside Galleria dell'Accademia one you'll find Michelangelo's *David*, and nearby in the same room, *The Four Prisoners*, a series of sculptures by Michelangelo that appear unfinished, with bodies made of marble seemingly trapped inside. This non-*finito* technique was something that Michelangelo invented and intended, in fact these were some of his later works completed mostly in his fifties. The prisoners you'll see are *The Awakening Slave*, *The Young Slave*, *The Bearded Slave*, and *The Atlas*. *The Awakening Slave* was the first to be completed between the years of 1520-1523, the other three



date to 1530-1534.

Michelangelo believed that the eyes revealed the soul, and therefore as soon as the eyes were shaped out of the marble and escaped the block to spot the viewer, the work was

complete. The incomplete nature of these statues is meant to symbolize the never-ending struggle that all humans face with being unable to free themselves from their material traps.

As you saw in Rome, within the Sistine Chapel, Michelangelo was fascinated by human anatomy. He excelled at portraying the masculinity of his figures. From painting to sculpture, the technique never left his hands, and the prisoners showcase his triumph of understanding the body. Studying the human body was something that was forbidden at the time of Michelangelo, but the carvings, with their chosen positioning of limbs and presence of veins, clearly demonstrate domination of this subject. His prisoners are locked in a way to reveal the drama, intensify emotion, and place action into marble. The way that they bear the marble becomes realistic and heavy. The prisoners also showcase Michelangelo's philosophy on sculpture. He never used more than one block of marble for any one piece, and believed that the figures that he was meant to produce were trapped within the block and it was his responsibility to free them in the way that God intended.

Friday, July 17, 2015.

Transported into Another Capital... of the Ancient Western Roman Empire.

Rome fell in 476 AD. The Roman Empire had grown to the extent of needing two capitals, one to govern the eastern half, and one the western. After the fall of Rome, a new capital was needed. Briefly, it was moved to Milan, but soon, the prominent capital of the western half became Ravenna. Ravenna is accessible today by train and sits as a quaint town ten miles west of the Adriatic sea. When Ravenna served as a capital, it stood on water, giving it a strategic advantage over other cities. Take a day trip to see this historical town in order to solidify your experience with the Roman Empire, and peek into The Dark Ages. Within Ravenna, you'll find the Basilica of San Vitale, containing some of the most exquisite mosaics. Mosaics were the main art form of the Middle Ages, and this Basilica serves as one of the most important examples of Christian Byzantine art in western Europe. The style was largely influenced by the art present in Constantinople, which today stands as Istanbul.

The Basilica of San Vitale began its construction in 526 AD, when Ravenna was under the rule of the Ostrogoths. You'll notice that you are drawn to the center of the church, which serves as its focus unlike other churches that are laid out architecturally in the shape of a cross. Stand here and gaze at the eastern end, it is covered with dense mosaic. The *tesserae*, or individual tiles that the mosaics are made of, glisten and shine in the light from the windows. You can imagine the illumination and beauty that would have been present within the church with the addition of candlelight and lanterns. The materials used to produce mosaics were those that were easily accessible. In this church, as the mosaics are largely displayed on the walls and ceiling, less durable, but more beautiful pieces could be used, like glass and gold. Other materials common in mosaics of the time were colored limestone, marble, granite, terracotta, semi precious stones, and mother-of-pearl. Precious stones and mother-of-pearl often added luminosity and texture to these mosaics. Christ is depicted multiple times. Once in the center, handing a crown to San Vitalus, once bearded in the center of the arch surrounded by the Apostles. If you look up, you'll see a lamb shown in the middle, this lamb of God also refers to Christ. It is centered above the altar and is surrounded by a wreath of victory, this element was used to symbolize the triumph of Christianity.

Another important mosaic within the church is located on the side walls of the eastern apse. It shows Justinian I dressed in purple robes (right), with a halo behind his head, standing next to clergy on the left,



including Bishop Maximian (under whom the church was completed in 547 AD), and soldiers on his right. These supporters emphasize Justinian as the ruler of both church and state. At this time in Constantinople, he was serving as the ruler of the Eastern Roman Empire.

Monday, July 20, 2015.

The large Church you keep seeing.



By wandering the streets whilst trying to keep your balance on the not-wide-enough sidewalks, you've had to notice the majestic Florence Cathedral. It's overwhelming, massive, and has a beautiful green, pink, and white marble facade. There are four components of the cathedral that you should be aware of as each holds its own bit of historical significance: the baptistry, the tower, the cathedral, and the dome.

The Baptistry of San Giovanni

Head to a set of doors that lead inside, there's four sets of these, but the most famous you can't miss are the east doors, coined by Michelangelo as *The Gates of Paradise*. The panels depict various bible stories, from top to bottom of the left side, the stories are of Genesis, Noah, Isaac, Moses, and David. The right half from top to bottom show Cain and Abel, Abraham, Joseph, Joshua, and Solomon. Examine the

exquisite detail made of bronze by Lorenzo Ghiberti, his technique was to construct these reliefs and add depth that emphasized their linear perspective, a classic attribute of Renaissance art. The doors took twenty-seven years to complete, and you'll understand why as you examine each detail.

The Tower

The *campanile*, an Italian bell tower, was begun by Giotto di Bondone in 1334. Giotto is often referred to as the father of the Renaissance, his work having influenced many great Renaissance artists. The tower serves as no exception, but due to his death in 1337, Giotto had only completed work on the first part of the tower, to the reliefs and hexagonal panels you'll see on the exterior of the tower. After his death, Andrea Pisano and artists like Alberto Arnaldi continued work on the outside. Take a look at the reliefs, they begin with the Creation of Man. Then, the reliefs depict his Activities, the Planets which regulate the course of his existence, the Virtues which fortify him, the Liberal Arts which educate him and the Sacraments which sanctify him. You can spend at least an hour examining all this detail, but for now, proceed inside the cathedral.

The Cathedral

You have now entered the third largest church in the world. Designed by Arnolfo di Cambio, it was the largest church in Europe upon its initial completion in the 15th century. Today, it's next in line after St. Peter's Basilica in Rome and St. Paul's Cathedral in London. Santa Maria del Fiore is the Virgin of the Flower, serving as a clear reference to the lily, which is the symbol of Florence. You'll find this lily everywhere, on man holes, t-shirts, postcards, and leather goods claiming to be made in Florence.

The Dome

It has withstood earthquakes, floods, and history. The dome was designed by Filippo Brunelleschi, a famous architect and engineer of the Renaissance. You'll notice that the dome is octagonal in its shape, and Brunelleschi was certainly innovative in his process as he made the dome concrete by having an inner and outer shell, the two being separated by a space. The inner shell is laid of light bricks in a herringbone pattern and is a self-supporting structural element, a true engineering and architectural feat. The outer dome serves as a heavier, wind-resistant covering. Inside the inner dome you'll find a fresco of *The Last Judgement*, completed much later than the dome itself in 1579.

Tuesday, July 21, 2015.

The return of the Ninja Turtles.

If there are two galleries that you can't miss while in Florence they are The Uffizi Gallery, the prior offices of the Medici family, and Galleria dell'Accademia, in which you saw Michelangelo's

David. It's time for you to get familiar with another ninja turtle and great Renaissance artist, Leonardo da Vinci. Within the Uffizi Gallery, you'll find da Vinci's *The Annunciation* (below). A painting that illustrated his gifts and talents not only as an artist, but as an engineer, physicist, and true scholar. Notice the wings of the angel, and her bodily form, they are similar to that of an airplane landing; originally, da Vinci wanted to copy the wings of a bird, but since his initial paint strokes, the wings have been lengthened. The grass mirrors the wind that would be caused by such a flight landing, it is noticeably set



in motion by the breeze. The painting also showcases da Vinci's true understanding of perspective and focus, the background isn't made clear but is fuzzy, much like a photograph would be today. The trees demonstrate his knowledge of botany, ranging in type and matching the season and location. Before the lily served as a symbol of Florence, it was commonly depicted in religious paintings as a sign of purity. Within this painting, the Madonna lily is shown in the hands of the angel, Gabriel, as he is delivering the news to Mary about her virginal pregnancy with Jesus. The lily serves as a reassurance of Mary's purity and a symbol to her virginity.

Many variations and depictions of *The Annunciation* have been made throughout art history, but Leonardo da Vinci masterfully paints many elements within his representation that take you farther than the story, they show a deeper understanding of a complex system. A clear example of the stark contrast between da Vinci's Renaissance style and the prior Middle



Ages style is *The Annunciation* by Fra Angelico (bottom, previous page), you'll find this fresco inside the the Convent of San Marco, located not too far from where you are now.

Thursday, July 22, 2015.

Time to pretend you vacation at the Medici summer palace.

If you want to take a relaxing stroll outside and continue wandering through the vast history Florence has to offer, head to the Boboli Gardens. You'll have to buy a ticket in front of the Pitti Palace, the Medici's summer palace, and proceed through its doors to enter this grand outdoor space; you'll soon see beautiful views of Florence and a lavish, beautiful, green trees. In Tivoli, you've seen the potential that landscape artists can reach, and the Medici family wanted no less than to achieve such beauty, to build a garden to match their wealth. The Boboli Gardens were built in 16th-century style. This was portrayed by incorporating longer axial developments, wide gravel avenues, the presence of statues and



fountains, and a grand amount of detail in the classical style. The openness of the garden was an outlier

characteristic, something not common to the 16th-century. Today, if you climb the steps of the center staircase, you'll appreciate the sights of not only Florence, but of the fairytale Tuscan region.

Ciao,

I hope you have enjoyed your time discovering new places with this guide. If you're craving a larger understanding of a particular part of Italy's culture or history, there are plenty of other resources available to you via Google and the internet. You can also pick up different guide books and schedule tours to keep learning about this country's infinite history. Walking around Rome and Florence through the words of this book, you're likely aware that lots has been left out. I've omitted mentioning that each city has a Piazza della Repubblica and a Via XX Settembre; both exist to honor the complete unification of Italy as a country in 1870, a movement referred to as the Risorgimento lasting from 1815-1871 (approximately), although earlier accounts of the attempt to unify have been found and are clearly visible through the artwork we have seen together in this guide book. By understanding more of the divides in territory of this peninsula, you'll gain insight into why Italians from Sicily may act differently than Italians from Naples may act differently than Italians from Milan. This country has pride, and much of that pride stems from tradition and heritage. So keep reading, keep learning, and keep exploring!

Grazie,
Anna Brezhneva