

# Hostelworld Guide for Rome

There aren't many cities in the world like Roma. No matter which way you turn you set your eyes on imposing monuments, dramatic statues or lavish fountains. Walking around the streets today it is easy to envisage what it would've been like centuries ago when crowds thronged to the Colosseum, Caesar's foot soldiers paroled the streets and everyone was decked in sandals. Once darkness falls it isn't as lively as some other European cities, but if you don't find a bar which gets your pulse racing don't worry - the city looks twice as breathtaking at night.

## In this Guide...

- Useful Information
- After Dark
- Places to Eat
- Top Attractions
- Budget Tips
- Where to Shop

## The Essentials

### Getting There

**By plane:** The Italian capital is served by two airports. The most widely used is Leonardo da Vinci Airport (Fiumicino). The quickest way to the city centre is via train which costs €11 one-way. The other airport, Ciampino Airport, is the airport which budget airlines use. A bus service connects it to Termini Station. One-way journeys cost €8.

**By train:** Most trains travelling to Rome from other Italian cities and Europe terminate in Termini Station. It is right in the middle of the city centre.

**By bus:** There are a number of stations you could end up in if travelling to Rome via bus. The most widely used is Lepanto and EUR Fermi.

### Getting Around

**On foot:** The best way to get around Rome is on foot. Most of the city's premier attractions within close proximity.

**By metro:** Rome's metro comprises of just two lines, although some stops are in particularly convenient locations, particularly in the Vatican.

**By bus:** Buses are easy to use and quite cheap. Each journey costs €1. All bus routes state clearly on the front where they are going.

### Useful phrases

- Hello:** Ciao / Bonjourno
- Goodbye:** Ciao / Arrivederci
- Please:** Per Favore
- Thank you:** Grazie
- You're welcome:** Prego
- Yes:** Si
- No:** No
- Of course:** Certamente
- Excuse me:** Scusa
- How are you?:** Come stai?
- Open:** Aperto
- Closed:** Chiuso
- What is your name?:** Come ti chiami?
- My name is...:** Mi chiamo...
- How much?:** Quanto costa?
- The bill please?:** Il conto per favore.

## Climate

Thanks to its location in southern Italy, temperatures in Rome's winters can become quite cool but they usually don't drop below 5°C. The coldest months are from December-February. Once March comes around the temperature begins to steadily rise, although for the next two months (March and April) it is more prone to rain than in other months. Come May the days become very warm and stay dry also. If you enjoy hot weather, then July and August are the months for you when it is very warm and very sunny. September stays dry for the most part but showers begin to show their ugly faces once more in October.

### Useful Information

- Language:** Italian
- Currency:** Euro
- Electricity:** 220 Volts AC/50Hz. 2-pin plug.
- Area Code:** 39 (ITL) 06 (Rome). Most local numbers are 7 digits, but this can vary.
- Emergency Codes:** Ambulance 118 / Fire 115 / Police 112
- Time Zone:** Central European Time (GMT +1)
- Central Post Office:** Piazza San Silvestro 19
- Main Tourist Office:** Via Parigi, 5

## Embassies

- USA:** +39 (0)6 46 741
- Canada:** +39 (0)6 44 59 81
- Australia:** +39 (0)6 85 27 21
- South Africa:** +39 (0)6 85 25 41
- UK:** +39 (0)6 42 20 00 01
- Ireland:** +39 (0)6 697 9121
- Germany:** +39 (0)6 80 95 11
- Spain:** +39 (0)6 684 04 01
- New Zealand:** +39 (0)6 441 7171
- France:** +39 (0)6 686 011

## Cheap Eats

**Al Picchio, 40, Via del Lavatore** Located just one minute from the Trevi Fountain, Al Picchio is extremely good value for its location. Staff are friendly and there is a nice atmosphere, particularly in the cavern-style part of this eatery downstairs. Pick bruschetta to start, risotto for your main, and you'll get a full meal for less than €10. *Open daily from 9.30am-3.30pm and from 6pm-10.30pm.*

**Bar Gelateria, Piazza di Trevi 90** It might call itself a 'gellateria', but you can get a pizza in this 'gellateria' for just €6. Its location is second to none - you can hear the bellowing water from the Trevi Fountain which is just around the corner as you eat. Marvellous! *Open daily from 7am-1am.*

**American Bar, Borgo Angelico** With many combo-deals such as 1 coke+1 pizza for €5, or 1 sandwich+1 coke for €4, you can do worse than a quick snack from American Bar. Handy if you are peckish before or after a trip to the Vatican Museum or St Peter's Basilica. *Open daily from 10am-5pm.*

**La Caravella, 32 Via Degli Scipioni** If you fancy pushing the boat out a little and spending more than €10 when eating out, La Caravella does combo-menus for €11. Choose from a wide variety of first and second courses, while potatoes and salad are included also. Drinks may hike up your bill a bit though. *Open daily from 11am-4pm and from 6pm-11pm, closed Thursdays.*

## Gelato! Gelato!

No matter where you are in the Eternal City, you are never far from a 'gelateria' (ice-cream bar). Choose from one scoop or two, small cones or large, and a wide variety of flavours such as nutella, banana, sorbetto (fruit sorbet), while for the more adventurous there are pistachio, amoretto and chocolate liqueurs. Gelaterias open some time around 12 noon and stay open until midnight. A cone with two scoops shouldn't cost more than €2.50.

## After Dark

**Living Room, Via Solferino** This extremely chic bar may not seem like it's the place for backpackers on their travels, but thanks to its affiliation with the next door hostel, you're bound to find somebody here to exchange stories. Regular DJs also make it one the most happening spots in town. *Open Mon-Sat 7am-3am, Sun 5pm-3am.*

**Trinity College Bar, 6, Via del Collegio Romano** 'The Trinity' has been popular with Romans and travellers alike for years and is one of the city's biggest and best bars. With three floors, you can always find somewhere to enjoy a few drinks along with the music played by the DJ who is there nightly. Not to be missed during the summer when the bar expands on to a patio. *Open daily from 12 noon-2.30/3am.*

## Gay / Lesbian Rome

Since World Gay Pride 2000, Rome's gay population has enjoyed a rebirth. New gay bars and clubs and more respect has helped its ever-growing gay and lesbian community. The city's first official gay bar, and still one of the most popular today, is **The Hangar** (Via in Selci 69). Other well known hotspots include the aptly named **Coming Out** (Via San Giovanni in Laterano, 8), **L'Alibi** (Via Monte Testaccio 44) in the Testaccio district and **Gloss** (Via del Cardello, 13) every Sunday.

**Jonothan's Angels, Via della Fossa 16, Piazza Navona** This bar doesn't conform to other bars' ethic of 'image is everything' as nobody cares what you are wearing or what you look like. Instead Jonathans Angles is an eccentric bar with décor that you will not see anywhere else. You won't know what to expect when you walk in, and you may not even know whether you want to stay or not. But here's a word of advice - do. *Open Mon-Sat 8pm-2am, Sun 1pm-2am.*

**Testaccio District** Rome isn't a city known for its hectic club scene, but naturally there are some clubs giving you the option of letting your hair down. If you do want to party into the early hours this area in the south-west part of the city is where to go, around the Piramide metro stop in particular.

**Supperclub, Via de'Nari 14** Sister to the infamous Supperclub in Amsterdam, finding this haunt is particularly challenging as it doesn't have a sign or it doesn't have any bouncers. But if you do locate it you'll be rewarded with a beer in one of Rome's hippest hotspots.

## Don't Miss

**Vatican Museum, Viale Vaticano 100** A visit to the Vatican Museum is arguably *the* most inspiring experience in Rome. As you stroll through the rooms you will seldom close your mouth as each one is as jaw-dropping as the next. Along with the Sistine Chapel, other rooms you won't forget in a hurry include the Gallery of Maps and the Room of the Immaculate Conception. *Open Mon-Sat from 9am-6pm although times can vary - check before visiting; admission €15.*

**Colosseum, Piazza del Colosseo** Home to brutal battles between man and beast, the Colosseum is an imposing building and is Ancient Rome's most symbolic. Walking around this amphitheatre is fascinating as you try to imagine what it was like in all its glory, complete with thousands of Romans and one Julius Caesar. *Open daily from 9am; admission €15.50 (EU reduced rates available).*

**St. Peter's Basilica, Piazza San Pietro** Before entering St Peter's, the first thing which strikes you is the number of detailed statues which overlook you in the square. Upon entering mosaics hang over you from every corner. You can also climb to the top of the dome for unforgettable views of the city. *Basilica - Open daily 7am-7pm (Apr-Sep) & until 6pm (Oct-Mar), admission free; Dome - Open daily from 8am-5pm, admission €3.50-€5 (stairs/lift).*

## Ensure Your Return to Roma!

**Trevi Fountain, Piazza di Trevi** Rome's most spectacular fountain may attract tourists all day and night, but this doesn't take away from its appeal. What's better is that you can hear the gallons of water flowing over the statues of Neptune and his chariots seconds before you see it. They say if you throw a coin over your shoulder into it, it ensures your return to Roma.

## Mark Your Calendar

**February/March** - The annual Six Nations Rugby Tournament is one of the year's biggest sporting events and attracts thousands from the UK, Ireland and France every year.

**March - Rome Marathon** While the thoughts of running over 26 miles may not appeal to everyone, over 10,000 athletes take part in this annual race which passes through the streets of Rome.

**April - Natale di Roma** Every April 21st Romans celebrate the birth of their famous city. Aventine Hill is lit up with burning candles while a huge fireworks display can be seen over the River Tiber.

**May - Primo Maggio** This outdoor concert on the first of May every year is the biggest music event of the year. Since it began in 1989 it has continuously attracted top international acts, along with thousands of revellers as it is free!

**June - Cornetto Free Music Festival** Held every year, the Cornetto Free Music Festival is one of the most popular events on the Roman calendar for obvious reasons! Held in one of Rome's most celebrated squares, last year Sting played. While this year's is yet to be confirmed, it is sure to be just as impressive.

**July - Festa di Noantri** Beginning on the third Saturday of July, this annual festival which takes place in the Trastevere district of the Italian capital is a mix of both formal and informal festivities and should not be missed.

**August - Gran Ballo di Ferragosto** Every August 15th a fabulous dance party takes place to celebrate the Feast of the Assumption. Various squares all over Rome are livened up by performances by professional dancers, accompanied by an orchestra, who invite the audience to join in the various dances, from tango to rock, from hip hop to ballroom, and everything in between!

**September - White Night** This festival is one of Europe's most popular and also takes place in Paris. For one night the city's theatres, cinemas, shops and more stay open all night, while there is a host of free entertainment all over the city also.

**December - Christmas in Piazza Navona** In this square just minutes walk from the Pantheon, traditional Christmas markets sell festive merchandise every year. Even if you're not in town to shop it is worth dropping down.

## Get Connected

**easyInternetcafé, Piazza Barberini** Opening on December 15th 2000, this was the first easyInternetcafé to open in Italy. Like all of the easyInternetcafés there are hundreds of terminals and this particular branch has 250 so you can rest assured you will always find a terminal. *Open daily from 7am-midnight; minimum purchase €1.*

**TreviNet PI@ce Internet Point, Via Arcione 103** This internet café enjoys a particularly good location just seconds from the Trevi Fountain. Along with the obligatory internet access, you can also burn photos on to discs for €4, buy framed pictures of Italy or even watch TV! *Open Mon-Fri 11am-11pm, Sat & Sun 4pm-11pm; €1=10 mins, €1.80=25 mins, €2.20=35 mins, €3.50=1 hour.*

**Kokonet, Vicolo d'Orfeo 13** Just 5 minutes from St Peter's Basilica, Kokonet is a cosy and relaxing place to surf the net with fast and reliable speed. As with most internet cafés, you can also use scanners, chat with friends back home and more. *Open Mon-Sat 10.30am-9pm, Sunday 5pm-9pm; €1 for 10 min, €2.50 for 30 min, €3.50 per hour.*

**Internet Café, Via dei Marrucini, 12** This aptly named internet café not far from Termini Station has 22 different terminals which are located in the bar, the 'Egyptian Hall' and the 'PC Hall'. Access is very speedy thanks to the broadband connection. *Open Mon-Fri 9.30am-2am, Sat & Sun 5pm-2.30am; 50c for 10 mins, €1.50 for 30 mins, €3 per hour.*

### www.

[www.the-colosseum.net](http://www.the-colosseum.net)  
[www.romatourismo.net](http://www.romatourismo.net)  
[www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va)  
[www.roma2000.it](http://www.roma2000.it)  
[www.youthhostelrome.com](http://www.youthhostelrome.com)

## Retail Therapy

**Via Condotti** You can't leave Rome without taking some time out to peruse the latest designs from the world's top designers. This street at the Spanish Steps is where Gucci, Valentino, Armani and more of the world's top designers have stores. You may not have the funds to pack your backpack with the latest designer gear, but you can always look.

**Via del Corso** Located at the foot of Via Condotti, Via del Corso is a street which stretches for nearly a mile and is lined with high-street stores that most of us are more accustomed to. This includes international brands such as Benetton but Italian stores also such as Messagerie Musicali, the city's flagship music store.

### Mercato di Campo de Fiori

This food market in the heart of the Italian capital in Campo de' Fiori is Rome's most colourful and also most famous. Walk around the fruit stalls to get your mouth watering at the sight of the fresh apples, pears, oranges and other types of fruit. If you plan on cooking back in your hostel you can also buy fresh meat, poultry and fish also. *Open from 6.30am-1.30pm Monday-Saturday.*

**Centro Commerciale La Romanina, Via Enrico Ferri** Of all Rome's shopping centres, Centro Commerciale La Romanina is the largest. Choose from over 140 shops as well bars, restaurants and more. Buy everything from clothes to shoes to groceries. *Open daily from 10am-8.30pm.*

**Mercato Porta Portese, Piazza di Porta Portese** Arguably Rome's best known flea market, if you are in the mood to do some bargain hunting when you are in the Italian capital this is where you need to go. Pick up everything from new clothes to second hand clothes to antiques to oriental handicrafts. *Open every Sunday from 6am-2pm.*

## Budget Tips

**Ask are there any extra costs before ordering** Restaurants in Rome are well-known for their top-quality food. But many have hidden costs that English speaking tourists are unaware of. Before sitting down and ordering your food, ask if there is a cover charge or service charge. If you don't, what you might think is a €7 bill could be increased to a €10 bill, so make sure to ask the waiter first of all.

### Stroll Through the Roman Forum

You have to pay to visit the Colosseum, Palatine Hill and Circus Maximus. But you can walk through the Roman Forum which was the heart of the city's commercial, political and social goings-on thousands of years ago for free. To imagine what it was like here in the height of ancient Rome you really have to open your mind as it hasn't been preserved as well as the Colosseum, but still shouldn't be missed on any visit to the Italian capital.

**Catch a sunset from Gianicolo Hill** If you make your way to Gianicolo Hill, not only can you enjoy out one of the best vistas of the city, but leave your visit until the evening and you can witness a sunset which will take your breath away.

**Get into the Vatican Museum for free** No, we're not trying to instigate a revolt against admission charges into the Vatican's number one tourist attraction! We're just letting you know that if you happen to be in Rome on the last Sunday of the month you can save yourself €13 as this is when one of Rome's number one attractions is free. Get there early though.

**Visit Monumento a Vittorio Emanuele** This unmissable, imposing, white marble building beside the Roman Forum is fastly becoming one of Rome's best known landmarks. Not liked by many locals as it looks so new beside so many ancient buildings, there is a museum inside which is free of charge.

## A Day in Rome...

Get up early and join thousands on a crusade to be the first into the Vatican Museum. Your jaw will seldom leave the floor as you walk through its numerous rooms.

Take a minute to marvel at the St Peter's Basilica. Afterwards go inside and wonder how exactly were those ceilings painted so high.

Grab a quick bite to eat. There are loads of different places to grab a quick snack around the Vatican City. Afterwards get the train to Barberini.

From Piazza Barberini follow the signs for the Trevi Fountain. Throw a coin over your shoulder to ensure your return to the Eternal City then rest your feet for a bit.

You can't visit Rome without going to the Colosseum. It's about a 25 minute walk from the fountain. Nothing beats setting your eyes on this building for the very first time.

Make your way back to Via del Latore and locate a restaurant called Al Picchio. While it is located beside one of the city's biggest tourist attractions, food is reasonably priced.

Not far from Al Picchio is Campo de'Fiori, an area with bars at every side. This is one of the most vibrant squares in the city and good for a night out.

Finish your day off with a bang and get down to the Testaccio district, the best part of Rome for clubbing.