

TripAdvisor's Guide to Rome Whether You're Planning a Pilgrimage or a Romantic Getaway ... 'When in Rome' Do What TripAdvisor Users Do

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Whether you're hoping for a glimpse of Pope Benedict XVI or longing to make a wish at the famous Trevi Fountain, it's clear - Rome is one of the top European destinations this spring. According to TripAdvisor, the leading travel information and recommendation site on the Web, Rome, Italy is currently the most frequently researched destination on the site. TripAdvisor offers travelers an honest guide to Rome with an insider's look at what's hot and what's not based on the opinions of real travelers.

"Not only is Rome currently the top TripAdvisor destination," said Christine Petersen, senior vice president of marketing at TripAdvisor, "but our users are saying that visiting Rome now is a great way to experience history in the making."

To help you plan your trip, here's the inside scoop on where to stay and top do's and don'ts for your visit to Rome:

TRAVEL BUZZ - TripAdvisor tips on seeing the city, dining and saving

1. Hoof it - Hands down, the best way to see the city is by foot with a guidebook
2. Enjoy a siesta - Be aware that stores, museums and other attractions often close in the afternoon and re-open in the evening. Also, many museums (Borghese Gallery, Capital Hill Museum, Castel Sant'Angelo, Baths of Diocletian, Museum of Roman Civilization, National Museum of Rome) close on Mondays and the Vatican Museum is closed on Sunday, so plan accordingly.
3. Spend less - Save money by loading up on free breakfast at your hotel or dining only in trattorias and pizzerias; Don't be shy about haggling over price with street vendors; use credit cards as much as possible and get cash (Euros) at ATMs.
4. Avoid long lines - Go to the Palatine Hill ticket booth to buy one pass for Palatine Hill and The Colosseum. Buy tickets in advance for Borghese Gallery and the Domus area.
5. Beware the dress code - St. Peter's Basilica, the Vatican Museum and Sistine Chapel and many of the other churches and religious attractions have strictly enforced dress codes, so leave the shorts, minis and tanks behind.
6. Spot the Pope on Wednesday - The weekly Papal blessing on Sundays at Noon draws huge crowds, so you might have better luck at the Papal General Audience on Wednesday mornings, in the hall to the left of St. Peter's Basilica as you face the square. Tickets are required but are free and must be secured at least two weeks in advance at <http://www.santasusanna.org/popeVatican/tickets.html>. During the summer, however, the Papal Audience sometimes moves to the Pope's summer residence, Castel Gondolfo, about 45 minutes outside of Rome.

MUST SEES - Of the top attractions, TripAdvisor's top six in order of user popularity

1. The Colosseum
2. St. Peter's Basilica
3. Roman Forum and Palatine Hill
4. The Pantheon

5. Vatican Museums and Sistine Chapel
6. Borghese Gallery

HIDDEN GEMS - TripAdvisor picks for great "unsung" sights

1. Villa Borghese
2. Villa Doria Pamphili
3. The Pincio
4. San Clemente
5. Museo Nazionale Romano
6. Janiculum Hill

RANTS & RAVES - Pearls of wisdom from experienced TripAdvisor travelers

1. Go off the beaten path - "... take the time to actually enter Trajan's Markets and walk around through the old entry road to the city." (posted on TripAdvisor April 22, 2005)
2. Ask a local - "The best way to find a good restaurant in any city is ask a local working in a shop in the area you want to eat." (posted on TripAdvisor April 25, 2005)
3. Stay central - "Definitely stay in the Piazza Navona/Campo de' Fiori/Pantheon area if possible." (posted on TripAdvisor April 8, 2005)
4. Validate your bus tickets - "Strong caution: Do validate your bus tickets! The buses are on an honor system, yes, but they are patrolled regularly and it will do you no good to try and get out of your 100 Euro fine each." (posted on TripAdvisor April 9, 2005)
5. Avoid flat-rate passes - "DO NOT buy the Roma Archaeological Card (now 22 Euros) that gets you into a list of places over the course of 7 days. It's a rip-off." (posted on TripAdvisor March 26, 2005)

TOP HOTELS - TripAdvisor best bets at different price points

1. \$100-200
Hotel Giuliana, Via Agostino Depretis 70, Rome 00184
62 Reviews, most recent posted on April 14, 2005
Average Price: US\$ 117
2. \$200-300
Residenza Cellini, Via Modena, 5, Rome 00184
81 reviews, most recent posted on April 10, 2005
Average Price: US\$ 242
3. More than \$300
Rome Cavalieri Hilton, Via Cadlolo 101, Rome 00136
48 reviews, most recent posted on April 27, 2005
Average Price: US\$ 511

TripAdvisor calculates an average price for each hotel, which is based on the rates of available rooms obtained from booking partners and other independent sources of pricing information. In addition, average hotel prices are updated nightly based on prevailing conversion rates. These are only estimates and not guarantees.

About TripAdvisor

TripAdvisor.com is the most popular travel information and recommendation destination worldwide (according to comScore Media Metrix, January 2005), with more than 1.6 million unbiased reviews and opinions and covering nearly 200,000 hotels and

attractions. A popular travel homebase with more than 13 million unique monthly visitors, TripAdvisor.com offers easy access to major worldwide online travel sites, including Expedia, Orbitz, hotels.com, American Airlines and Travelocity, for the best deals on the Web. TripAdvisor offers travel suppliers a cost-per-click marketing platform, guaranteeing the budgeted number of leads (not just impressions) with every campaign. Winner of dozens of awards, including PC Magazine's Top 100 Web Sites and Forbes Best of the Web, TripAdvisor is part of IAC/InterActiveCorp .

SOURCE: TripAdvisor

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