



Walks in Rome



ROMA CAPITALE

The wheel of history

The Oppian and Esquiline Hills



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Piazza Vittorio Emanuele II, the “Porta Magica” (Magic door) flanked by statues of the Egyptian God Bes

The wheel of history

The Oppian and Esquiline Hills

Rome for you

Information series on the City of Rome

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Cover image, the so-called Trofei di Mario (Trophies of Marius)
On this page, San Martino ai Monti, detail of the room with staircase leading underground



A nineteenth-century view of the Esquiline Hill by B. Pinelli



An eighteenth-century engraving of the so-called Trofei di Mario (Trophies of Marius) by G.B. Piranesi

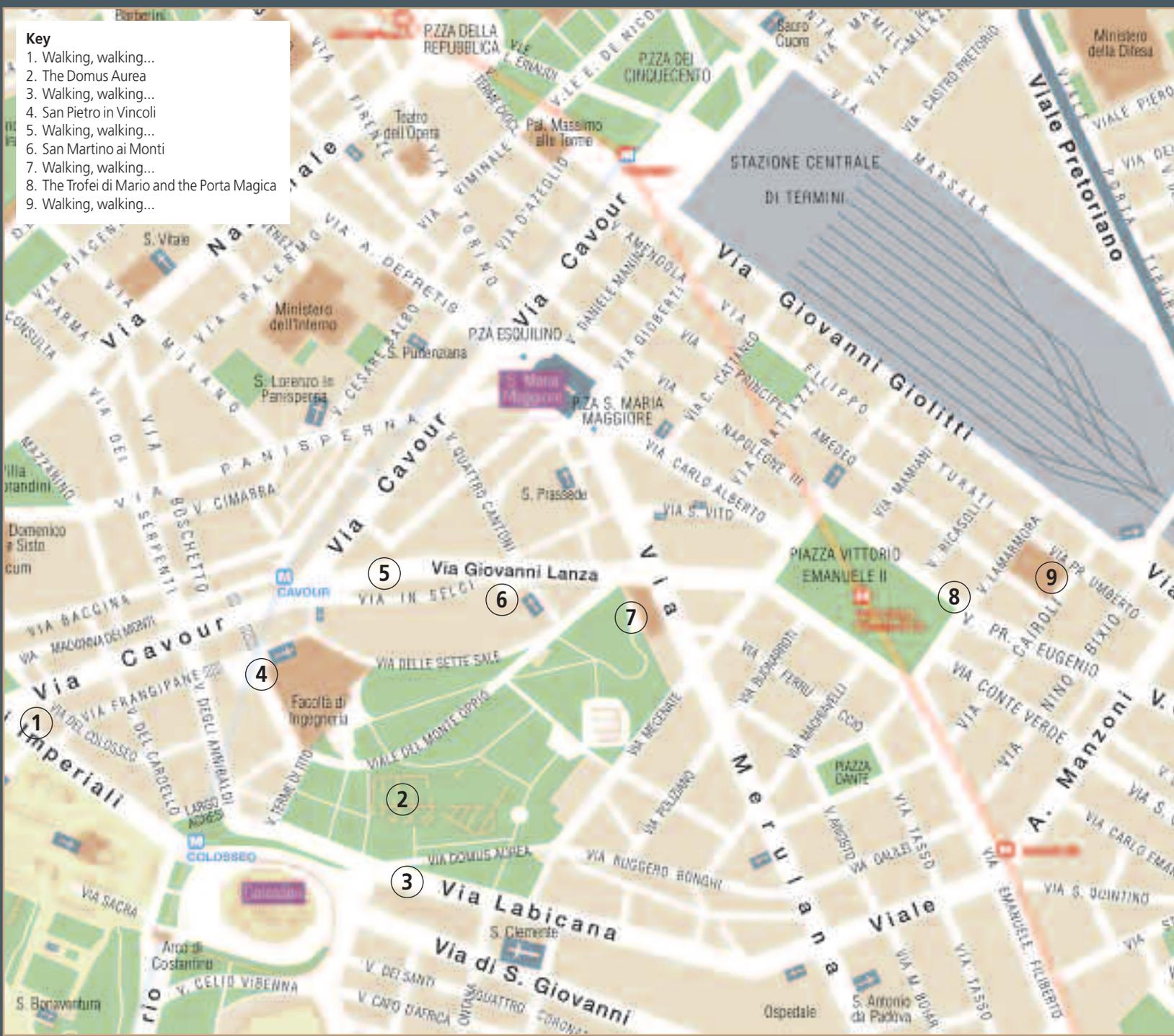
Presentation

Walks in Rome are a series of itineraries for those wishing to further their knowledge of the city. Publications covering Rome's great Renaissance period have already been made available - Caravaggio, Raphael, Michelangelo, and Baroque art as expressed in the architecture of Bernini and Borromini. Now further special walks have been drawn up to accompany and aid the visitor in their "step by step" discovery of our city. As such, the city is represented and "read" as a unique picture, a mosaic which comes together and dissolves according to the needs of the visitor. You can choose from *monumental Rome* (Via dei Fori Imperiali and the Colosseum), *The Hill of Poetry* (the Aventine and its surroundings), *Amid Woods and Aqueducts* (the Caelian Hill), *The dawning of Christian Rome* (San Giovanni in Laterano and Santa Croce in Gerusalemme), *The Suburra* (the neighbourhood of Monti and Santa Maria Maggiore), and *A Virtual Film Set* (Via Veneto and Surroundings). It has been a daunting enterprise but a fulfilling one that has succeeded in simply conveying an image of the city's traditions and cultural identity, whilst being at the same time scientifically accurate. The narration uses both a graphic approach and text, which is an effective system for conveying an understanding of Rome's vast and unbelievable history. Our guides allow tourists to immediately identify the main significance of their chosen walk and at the same time orientate themselves in the area they wish to visit. These carefully selected walking guides serve well as a symbolic "artist's sketchbook," providing the visitor with a large window display, full of mirrors, inside of which there is a cultural horizon that could not be more Roman, evocative or abundant in enduring values.

Rome awaits you!

*The Tourist Office
of the Rome Municipal Council*

- Key**
- 1. Walking, walking...
 - 2. The Domus Aurea
 - 3. Walking, walking...
 - 4. San Pietro in Vincoli
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...Begin the
walking tour ...

The Oppian and Esquiline Hills

In the ancient city, *Esquiliae* was the name given to the eastern hilly area that created the fifth *Augustea* District. The name, which probably originates from the verb *ex-celere* (resident of the exterior), illustrated that the area was considerably different in respect to the original centre on the Palatine. Beginning in the ninth century BC, a good part of the Esquiline was used as a burial area and maintained this purpose throughout the entire republican period. However, the western summits known as the *Oppian*, *Fagutalis* and *Cispinus* were a part of the primitive *Septimontium* (religious festival of the seven hills) and consequently were included within the Servian Wall. During the *princeps* of Augustus, the cemetery area was reclaimed, fully included within the city and luxurious villas such as the *Mecenate* began to embellish the entire area. Throughout the imperial period, many of these aristocratic residences became encompassed into imperial property despite the fact the area maintained a peripheral feel in respect to the more ancient nucleus of the city. Its distance from the centre encouraged the concentration of the early Christian basilicas here and some of the most ancient *tituli* quickly followed, as such a new Christian city arose next to the pagan one. Events during the Middle Ages caused the few surviving inhabitants to concentrate their activities near the banks of the Tiber, thus the hills of the Esquiline remained practically uninhabited. During the

second half of the sixteenth century, Sixtus V launched a rebirth of the area with the construction of his own villa in the area of present-day Termini train station as well as with the creation of a modern network of roads that had the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore at its centre. Successive centuries would see the area flourish with grand noble villas, emulating those of classical antiquity which made the hilly area into an unforgettable city-garden until 1870. However, when Rome became the capital, everything was sold, parcelled out and destroyed. According to the 1873 regulatory plan, the area was designated for public administration and a new Rome was superimposed over the ancient one. During the twentieth century, the Esquiline experienced a strong increase in its residential population with a progressive urban deterioration. Beginning in the eighties, a neighbourhood advancement programme was launched that began with the renovation of Piazza Vittorio. Thus, the wheel of history continued to turn and provide new challenges and changes. Currently, the area between the Oppian and Esquiline Hills has the largest number of inhabitants originating from other areas of the globe and exhibits all of the advantages and difficulties that this dimension involves. The ancient Esquiline finds itself at the cutting edge of new strategies for advantageous co-habitation among cultures. Yet again, it is the birthplace of a new city.

1. Walking, walking...

Our journey begins at *Largo Corrado Ricci*. Take a right at the beginning of *via Cavour* onto *via del Colosseo*, one of the roads that survived the many demolitions of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This road leads us into the fabric of ancient Rome. After a few metres, take a left onto *via del Buon Consiglio*, which gets its name from the church of the **Madonna del Buon Consiglio**. The church was initially given the name *San Pantaleone* but around the middle of the eighteenth century, it was assigned to the archconfraternity of the *Madonna di Genazzano*, also known as the *Buon Consiglio*, who restored it. Severely damaged by a fire during the last century, it has since been deconsecrated, but at one time exorcisms were held here for the possessed. According to traditions, there is an underground well that has miraculous water containing the body of St. Pantaleon. At the end of *via del Buon Consiglio*, take a right onto *via del Cardello*, famous in the past for being the location of one of the most noted sixteenth-century *osteria* (taverns), the "Gatto Nero" (Black Cat). At no.15, the-

re is a small building with a courtyard that is adorned with a **sixteenth-century fountain** whose water flows

from a grotesque mask. Most likely, the fountain, which was transferred here, is what remained of the portion of the sixteenth-century *Villa Silvestri* that was ultimately demolished for *via dei Fori Imperiali*. The remainder of the Villa became the *Pio Istituto Rivaldi*. At the end of *via del Cardello*, we find ourselves again on *via del Colosseo*. Precisely at this intersection, there is the church of **Santa Maria ad Nives**, which in ancient times was dedicated to *San Andrea de Portugallo*. The single nave church, adorned with paintings from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, at one time belonged to the *Università dei Rigattieri*. It changed its name when it was passed to the confraternity of Santa Maria della Neve. The late Baroque façade, perhaps designed by Carlo Fontana or Giuseppe Sardi, has a slightly convex progression and includes a sectioned tympanum and angular pilasters. To the left of the church, on *via del Colosseo*, there is a protective wall and the massive **Pio Istituto Rivaldi**, previous-



Madonna del Buon Consiglio, façade



Madonna del Buon Consiglio, interior



A sixteenth-century fountain, possibly originating from Villa Silvestri

sly known as *Villa Silvestri*. The villa was built by Antonio da Sangallo the Younger on behalf of Eurialo Silvestri, a noble gentleman at the time of Pope Paul III, Farnese. The villa's garden extended all the way to the *Basilica di Massenzio* prior to 1932 when the small Velian Hill was split in order to create *via dell'Impero*, a road today known as *via dei Fori Imperiali*. After passing to various owners, the villa became the property of the Savoia family in 1662, who then sold it to the charitable institution founded by the Jesuit Father Gravita, who named it after Monsignor Ascanio Rivaldi. The palace

Santa Maria ad Nives, façade



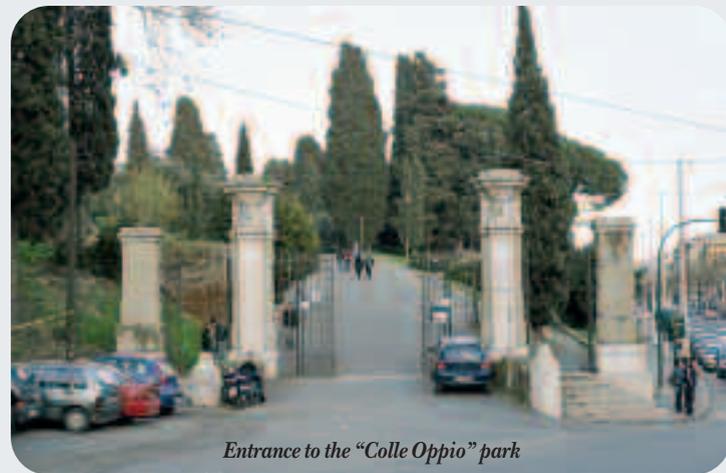
features the remnants of lacunar ceilings adorned with the various coats of arms of noble families and grotesque decorations, whereas the garden contains the remains of fountains, nymphaeum and statues. At the end of *via del Colosseo*, there is *Largo Agnesi* whose terraces provide a beautiful view of the area surrounding the Colosseum, as well as the Velian and Palatine Hills. Continuing to the left, past *via Vittorino da Feltri*, which contains large school buildings, there is *via degli Annibaldi*. This road was dug in 1894 as a sort of trench between the slopes of the Esquiline and takes its name from the Roman family, members of the Ghibellines, who supported Frederick II. The family obtained control of the Colosseum, previously fortified by the Frangipane, from this sovereign. Near the intersection with *via Nicola Savvi*, it is possible, with advance permission, to visit a **nymphaeum**. It has a basilica shaped design that is probably from the late-Republic age and was discovered at 6 metres underground during the excavation work for the road in 1895. The remains include a large apsidal room with basin and is adorned with niches featuring decorations in the form of shields, armour, cornucopias and *bucrami* (heads of cattle) created from pumice as well as pieces of marble, glass and shells. **The Torre degli Annibaldi (Annibaldi Tower)** is located on the right side of *via degli Annibaldi*, on the slopes of the Fagutalis, one of the three summits of the Esquiline. The building, which in part has collapsed and currently belongs to the Order of the Maroniti, was erected in 1204 in an advantageous position as a controlling fortalice for the Colosseum. Subsequently, the extensive fortification system to which it was connected housed the Convent of Santa Maria in Monasterio. To the right of *via degli Annibaldi*, there is the beginning of *via Nicola Savvi*, above which, facing the



The Annibaldi Tower

Colosseum, there are a few visible remains of the **Terme di Tito** (Baths of Titus). With the arrival of the Flavian dynasty, *damnation of the memory* of Nero began. This included returning the area previously confiscated by Nero for the *Domus Aurea* complex to public use. The Baths of Titus were installed in the area where the private Neronian bathing establishments may have been located, as witnessed by Suetonius. The baths were still visible around the middle of the sixteenth century as works of the Venetian architect Andrea Palladio

testify. The complex was successively demolished for building material until the 1930s when it became a part of a definitive public park area. The building's design confirmed the innovations of the *Terme Neroniano-Alessandrino* (Baths of Nero and Alexander) built in 62 AD by Nero in Campus Martius. The design featured a central axis for the bathing houses. Beginning from South to North, it ran *caldarium* (hot), *tepidarium* (warm) and *frigidarium* (cold). Twin symmetrically equal areas flanked it to sides that encompassed changing rooms (*apodyteria*), gymnasiums and various services. The most recent excavations, assisted by the study of the Palladian drawings, have ascertained that the complex was distributed on various levels along the slope of the hill. The gate to **Parco del Colle Oppio** ("Colle Oppio" Park) is located along the descent of *via Nicola Savvi*. This gate was built in the 1930s by architects R. de Vico and A. Muñoz. The entrance to the ruins of the *Domus Aurea* is located to the left after travelling a short distance along *viale della Domus Aurea*. The complex was reopened for tours from 1999 to 2005, but was then declared unstable due to a collapse caused by the infiltration of rainwater from park's drainage system.



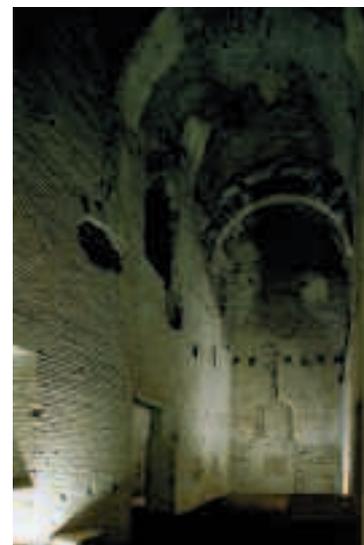
Entrance to the "Colle Oppio" park

2. The Domus Aurea

The immense residence, the result of Emperor Nero's fervent imagination, was created by architects Severus and Celer. It extended along the Palatine, Esquiline and Caelian Hills incorporating and transforming buildings that existed prior to the famous fire of 64 AD. When referring to the complex today only the remains located on the Oppian Hill, the part which has provided the greatest contributions to our knowledge about the monument, are considered. Nero's residence was inspired by models for Hellenistic monarchies. It included pavilions surrounded by parks populated with exotic fauna and an artificial lake at its centre, on which the Colosseum was later built. It also included small port systems built to imitate those found in the maritime centres of the period. On the side of the lake, where the church of *Santa Francesca Romana* currently stands, there was the complex's vestibule that housed the 120 ft. tall bronze *Colossus* depicting

the emperor in the guise of the sun god Sol. The statue was a work of art by the Greek sculptor *Zenodoros*, who had already erected a colossal image of Mercury for the Gauls of Auvergne. Years later, the statue was moved next to the Flavian Amphitheatre and centuries later, it would give rise to the naming of the *Colosseum*. The first nucleus of the palace was the so-called *Domus Transitoria*, which connected the complexes on the Palatine with those on the Esquiline across the high grounds of the Velian. The Flavian family's residence on the Palatine, created by architect Rabirio, probably reused many of Nero's structures. The pavilion situated on the Oppian Hill allowed for an extensive view of the valley and the lake. In order to build it, the slopes of the hill were excavated and a series of reinforcing terraces were added. The urgency to complete the enormous project forced the architects to reuse some pre-existing structures, in par-

ticular some *horrea* (warehouses), but we know that many parts of the palace were still not completed in 69 AD. The surviving pavilion structure consists of two large polygonal courtyards connected by a series of rooms. At one time, these rooms were open, extremely bright and situated around the celebrated Octagonal Room. They were buried during Trajan's time in order to be used as foundations for a new bathing complex. The Domus Aurea complex extended from east to west for approximately 350 metres and was 60 metres wide. It was preceded to the south by a sloping portico of which some traces still remain. To the north, the rear of the construction, there were long **cryptoporticus** (covered passageways) which served as a barrier against the cold and allowed the servants to move about freely, thus avoiding the areas used for entertaining. The complex's decoration was entrusted to the painter *Fabullus*, who covered the walls and ceilings with minute decorations with fanciful features. These paintings, which were copied by Renaissance painters, who were lowered down into the dark with only candlelight, inspired the so-called "grotesque" style. Elsewhere, marble decorations predominated including the flooring in *opus sectile* (patterned inlay) and the walls which were covered up to a certain height with panels and small pillars. Almost all of the marble was reused to decorate the Baths of Trajan and a few pieces are conserved in the adjacent *Antiquarium*. The pavilions began to be dug out at the beginning of the seventeenth century to search for treasures and only recent excavations have been for scientific purposes. The **Sala Ottagona (Octagonal Room)** is a fairly recent find. Its dome was an early model for the one used for the Pantheon built during Hadrian's period. Many studies have identified this dome as the *coenatio rotunda* as cited by Suetonius. The *coenatio rotunda* was similar to a planetarium with a reconstruction of the heavens on the ceiling and had a mechanism, probably with hydraulic

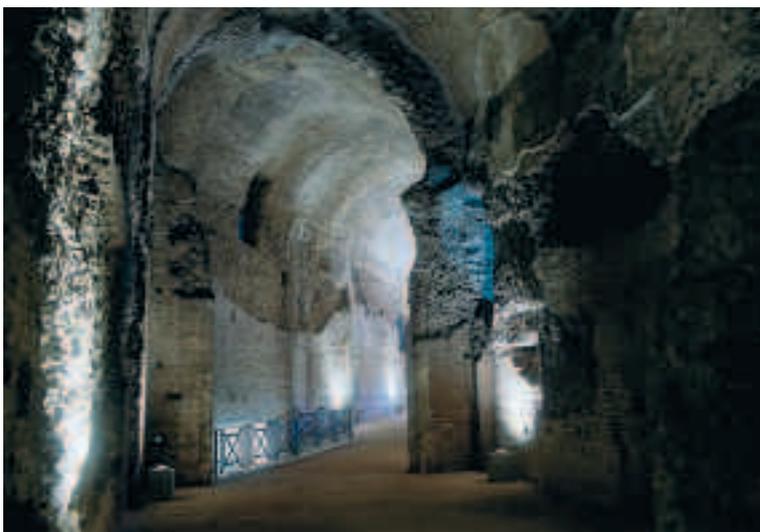


The room of the Civette (owls)

traction, which made the dome continually rotate day and night. With the death of Nero in 68 AD, the area began to decline and the Baths of Titus and the Flavian Amphitheatre were built on the area. After a disastrous fire in 104 AD, the complex was definitively abandoned and its burial began with the construction of the Baths of Trajan. To better sustain the weight of the bathing complex, Nero's structures were reinforced by sustaining walls and replacement colonnades which altered the design of the original buildings.



The Stucco Room or the Room of Hector and Andromache



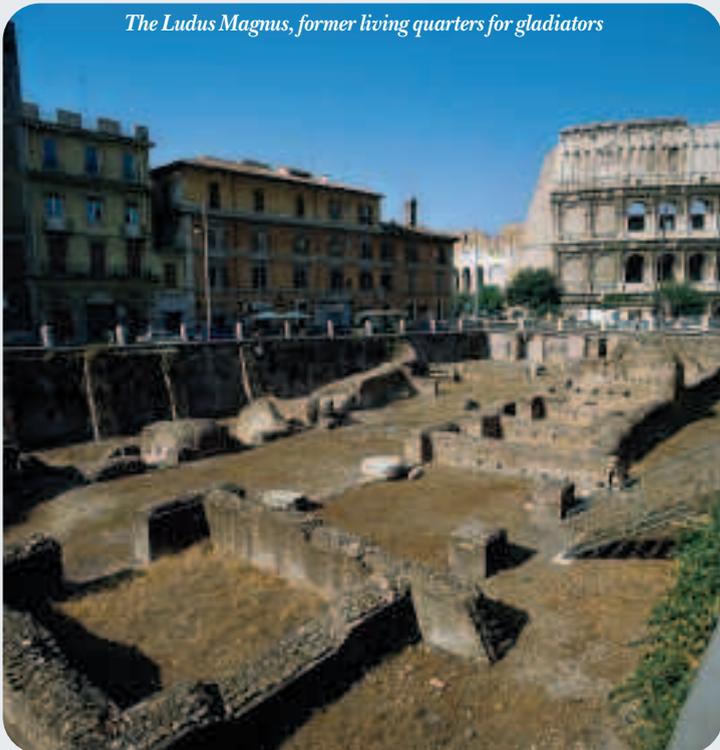
Domus Aurea, entrance

3. Walking, walking...

Looking down from *viale della Domus Aurea* towards *via Labicana*, it is possible to catch a view of the remains of the **Ludus Magnus**. These remains are located at the centre of an area below street level and are surrounded by a metal railing. This structure was the most important Roman gladiatorial barrack built during the *princeps of Domitian*. Its remains were identified in 1937 during demolition in the area for the construction of new buildings, while more intense excavations were performed in 1961. The barracks had a rectangular portico structure with a courtyard at its centre. In the middle of the courtyard, there was a small amphitheatre created by an

oval arena equipped with a small cavea (underground cells for the animals) to aid in gladiator training. Around the courtyard, there were series of rooms used for accommodation. An **underground corridor** allowed the fighters to reach the performer's area of the Colosseum during games. These barracks were a part of the vast area that Domitian had built to service the Flavian Amphitheatre, which included other barracks, warehouses for scenery used during the games, the armoury and the infirmary. Continuing on *via della Domus Aurea*, along which there are fountains and pergolas, there is a **monument to Alfredo Oriani**, a nineteenth-century politically subversive writer and patriot.

The Ludus Magnus, former living quarters for gladiators



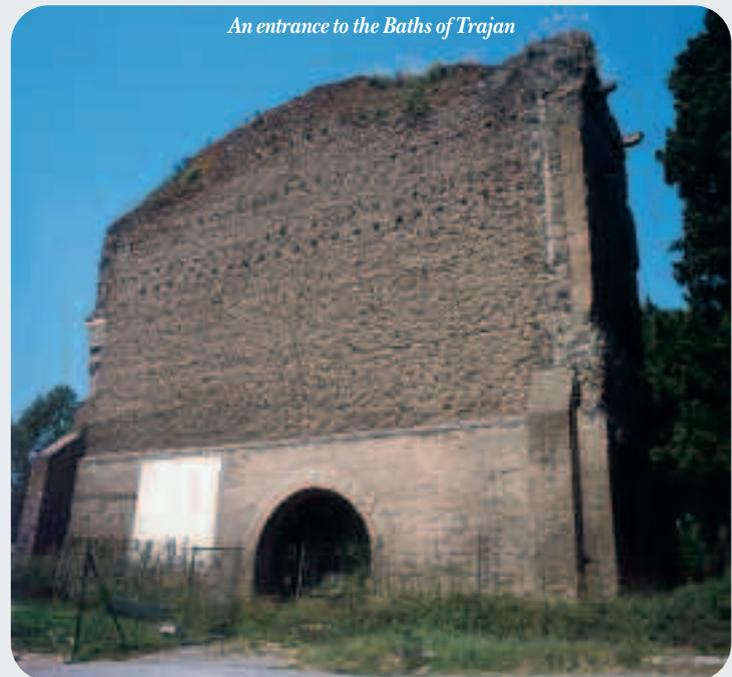
Take a left on *via Serapide* and enter the "Colle Oppio" (the Oppian Hill) Park. This portion of the park is characterised by the presence of the **Terme di Traiano (Baths of Trajan)** ruins. The emperor had the baths built on the remains of the *Domus Aenea*, which had been devastated by a fire in 104 AD. The designer of these baths was Apollodorus of Damascus, the same architect responsible for Trajan's Forum and Markets. According to legend, Hadrian killed the architect because he was annoyed by Apollodorus' criticism of his dome projects, which he ridiculed as being "pumpkins." The Baths of Trajan represented the definitive model for grand imperial baths, as its features were later replicated in successive creations. There was a large area (330 x 315 metres) enclosed at the back by a large exedra and surrounded by gardens, pavilions,

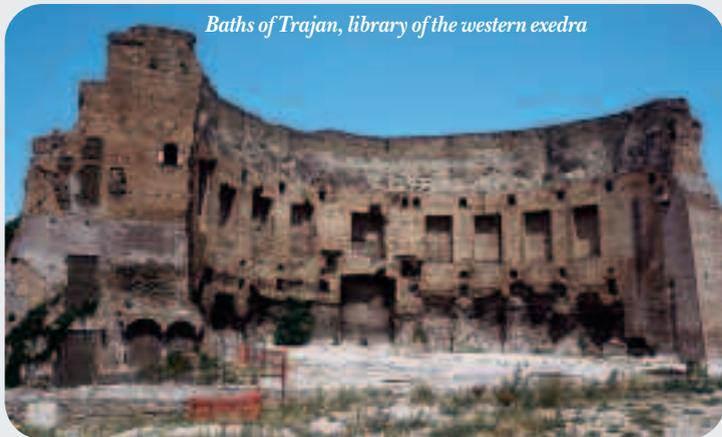


The monument to Alfredo Oriani

nymphaeum and probably, a library. The actual bathing complex was located at the centre and was equipped with changing rooms, gymnasiums

An entrance to the Baths of Trajan

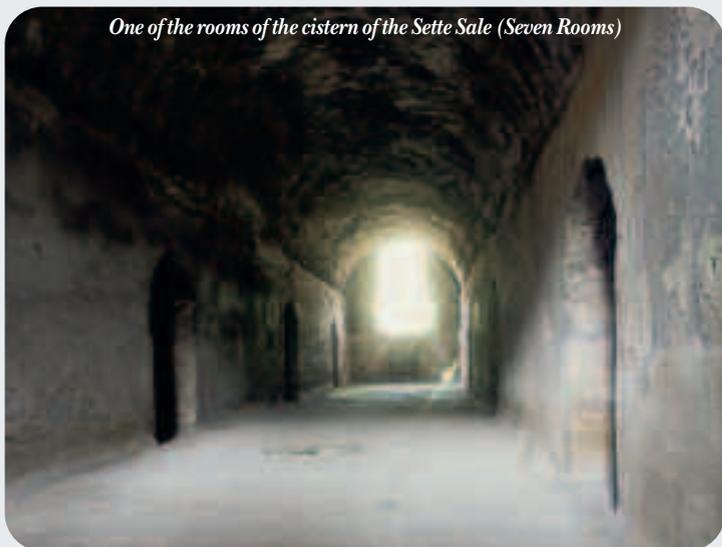




Baths of Trajan, library of the western exedra

and basins for mud baths as well as thermal waters. The decision to orient the baths NE-SW in order to maximise the sun's heat was maintained in successive bathing establishments. Other modifications included adding a series of basins with water of varying temperatures, a *caldarium*, a *tepidarium*, and finally, a *frigidarium*, along with a large open pool known as a *natio*. There were also numerous rooms for private baths, massages and saunas. Only two exedras, a

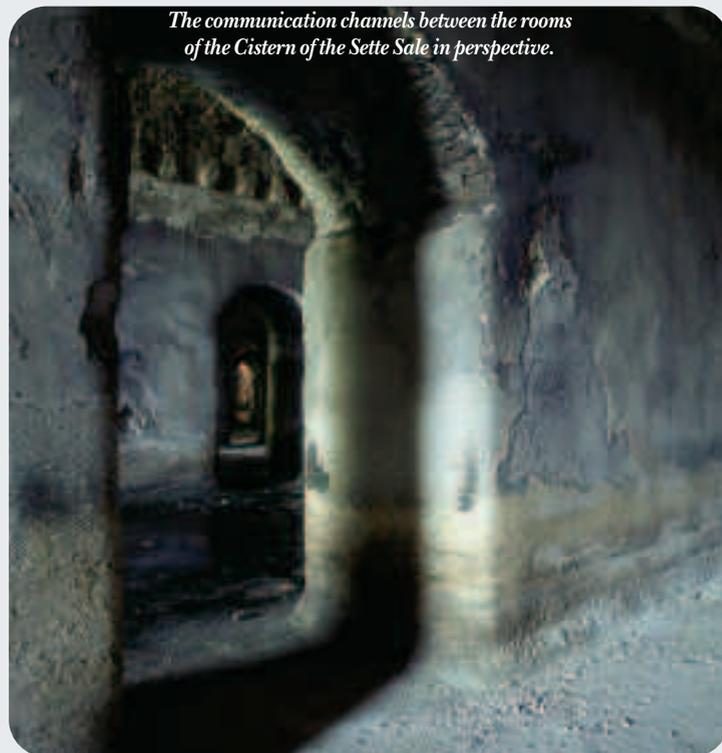
hall from the external enclosure with two apses and some minor remains from these baths are still visible today. According to testimonial inscriptions, they were also the first to be open to women. The celebrated *Laocoön* group, perhaps recovered from the *Domus Aurea*, which is currently visible in the Octagonal courtyard of the Vatican Museums, was among the numerous works of art that adorned this facility. Continue to *via delle Terme di Traiano* where



One of the rooms of the cistern of the Sette Sale (Seven Rooms)

there is the so-called **Cisterna delle Sette Sale (Cistern of the Seven Rooms)**, inside an area behind a high wall and enclosed by a gate. This cistern contained the water necessary for operating the Baths of Trajan. It is also possible that they were previously in use for the *Domus Aurea* and the Baths of Titus. During the sixteenth century, the rooms, originally believed to have numbered seven (hence the name) were drawn by Pirro Ligorio. However, in 1760 another two cisterns were discovered but a drawing of the entire structure, which includes the nine galleries and nine cisterns, was completed only during the last century. The complex was completely covered in *opus signinum*, a waterproof concrete, and it was possible to enter the rooms through two openings to control

water level and perform necessary maintenance. The water flow for the bathing facility was regulated by pipes and large bronze taps. The late imperial age witnessed the construction of a courtly villa above the structure with small private baths, whereas in the successive centuries, the cisterns were used as communal graves for the plague-stricken. Upon reaching the end of *via delle Terme di Traiano*, take a left onto *via delle Sette Sale*. Continuing along this road, you pass one of the entrances to a large complex built from 1915-25 for the **Facoltà di Ingegneria (Faculty of Engineering)**, a large project which required the destruction of various ancient chapels and oratories. From *via delle Sette Sale*, we reach *Piazza di San Pietro in Vincoli*, where there is the celebrated basilica of the same name.



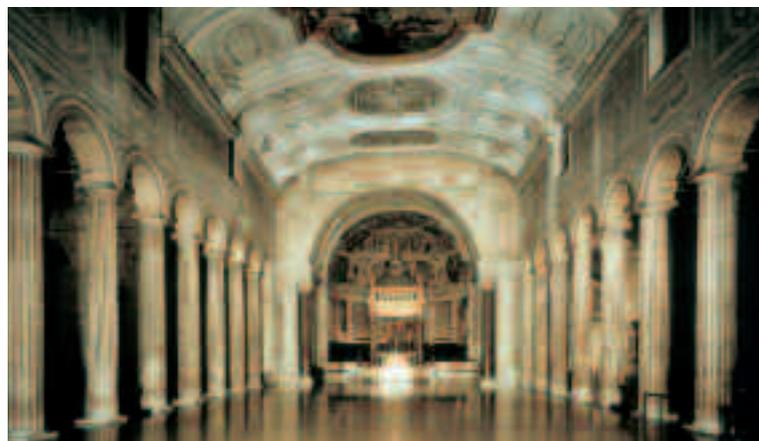
The communication channels between the rooms of the Cisterna delle Sette Sale in perspective.

4. San Pietro in Vincoli

The **San Pietro in Vincoli** (St. Peter's Chains) basilica is one of the few of the numerous tombs of the square. The basilica is known as the **Basilica di San Pietro in Vincoli** because of the wide impact of the basilica in the history of the city. St. Peter, who he was imprisoned in Rome, the daughter of the Roman consul of the time. The chains were presented to Pope Leo the Great who witnessed the miracle, but together with the coat of arms of the Roman Republic, the apostle's imprisonment in the Vatican Prison. The church was built during the early decades of the century, under the papacy of Sixtus IV. In the century, excavations have revealed the identification of the remains of the preceding *domus ecclesiae* dating back to the third century. Around the middle of the sixth century, Pope Pelagius I had the **relics of the Maccabees**, the seven brothers who promoted the Jewish resistance against Hellenistic conquest, returned to the basilica. Their remains, which were discovered in a sarcophagus during the excavations of 1876, are now preserved under the high altar along with the **urn of the chains of St. Peter**.

The austere **façade** features five windows and an open **portico** of five straight arches with octagonal pillars, as desired by Sixtus IV (*della Rovere*) during the re-

modernising efforts of 1475. The portico was attributed to Vasari and Baccio Pontelli, but it is currently considered to be the work of Meo del Caprino. The *della Rovere* family coat of arms appears on the capitals of the pillars, while the portico is enclosed with an early eighteenth-century **railing** adorned with the coat of arms of Clement XI of the *Albani* family. The **main entrance** to the basilica is a part of the renovations of Sixtus IV, *della Rovere*, and is surmounted by this important Ligurian family's coat of arms. The basilica's interior has three apsidal naves divided by **twenty Doric marble columns**, most likely of Greek origin, placed on Ionic bases that were created during the eighteenth century. The central nave features a lacunar ceiling based on a design by Francesco Fontana, and is adorned with the 1706 fresco of **the Miracle of the Chains** by G.B. Parodi. The side aisles have cross vaulted ceilings that date back to the renovations of Pope Julius II. In the right aisle at the first altar, there is a painting of **St. Augustine** by "Guercino." At the second altar, there is a copy of the *Domenichino* **Liberation of St. Peter** and next to it, the **monument to Cardinal Girolamo Agucchi** based on a design by



The interior

the same artist. Further ahead in the right transept, there is the celebrated **Mausoleum of Julius II**, which was completed in 1545 by Michelangelo with the assistance of his under studies. The mausoleum was built according to the desires of the *della Rovere* Pope, who had commissioned the Tuscan artist in 1505 to create a monument of grandiose proportion that was to be placed inside St. Peter's basilica directly below the dome and was to be adorned with forty statues. However with the pope's death and the election of Leo X of the Medici family, the project was initially shelved and then greatly re-dimensioned. In the end, after various mishaps that had Michelangelo speaking of a "tragedy of the sepulchre," it was transferred to *San Pietro in Vincoli*. At the centre of the monument, there is the celebrated **Moses**, actually created by Michelangelo in person between 1514 and 1516. Next to him in two niches, there are statues of the two biblical wives of Jacob, **Rachel** (left) and **Leah** (right), symbolising an idealistic life of faith and an active life and charity, respectively. These statues were sketched by Buonarroti and completed by Raffaello da Montelupo from 1542 to 45. The **reclining Julius II** statue is traditionally attributed to the scalpel of Maso del Bosco, even though recent studies suggest signs of Michelangelo's own hand. Regarding the

remaining images, the **Madonna with Child**, who is above the image of the pope, is attributed to Scherano da Settignano, whereas the **Prophet and Sybil** that flank it are attributed to Raffaello da Montelupo. The success of this monument undoubtedly rests entirely on the titanic force that is released by the powerful image of Moses. He is depicted at the moment he descended from Mt. Sinai with the tablets containing the Ten Commandments and is enraged with the Jews, who have taken to worshipping the Golden Calf idol. Some of the uncompleted masterpieces of Michelangelo, the so-called **Prisoners**, the chained slaves that were designed to adorn the grand St. Peter's sepulchre, ended up in Florence and at the Louvre. In the small chapel at the end of the right aisle, there is the extremely vivid **Santa**



The counter-façade



San Pietro in Vincoli, façade

Margherita, another work by G. Francesco Barbieri, who is known as the "Guercino." The high altar features a canopy by Virginio Vespignani, under which is the confession containing the reliquary of the chains. The canopy features a fifteenth-century relief depicting **Scenes from the life of St.**

Peter by Cristoforo Foppa, who is known as the "Caradosso." The crypt located under the altar contains an **early Christian sarcophagus** containing the reliquary of the Maccabei. Moving to the left aisle, in the second altar, there is a very interesting seventh-century mosaic that features **St. Sebastian**. He is usually depicted as a young nude pierced by arrows but in this mosaic he is depicted as an older, bearded officer of the Imperial army, reflecting more ancient Byzantine iconography. Next, there is an eighteenth-century **monument to Cardinal Cinzio Aldobrandini**. In the first altar, there is the **Deposition of the Cross**, attributed to Cristoforo Roncalli, who is known as the "Pomarancio." At the beginning of the aisle, there is the **burial monument to Cardinal Nicola Cusano**, perhaps the greatest philosopher of the fifteenth century. He was the author of the fundamental treatise *La dotta ignoranza* (*On learned ignorance*) and among the first to imagine an unlimited universe devoid of a centre. The monument's bas-relief featuring an image of the cardinal, an angel and St. Peter, is a work of art by Andrea Bregno. To the left of the entrance, there is a **fresco** depicting

the 1476 procession across Rome with the image of St. Sebastian beseeching the end of the plague, artwork which is attributed to students of Antoniazio Romano. Below it, there is the **tomb of Antonio and Pietro del Pollaiuolo**, with portraits of the two celebrated brothers and artists sculptured by Luigi Capponi in 1498. Externally and to the left of the basilica, there is the considerable structure of the convent. The 1503 work by Giuliano da Sangallo is now incorporated into the Faculty of Engineering complex. The basilica's cloister with its columns, Ionic capitals, and beautiful well is a work of art by the same architect. In the same area, prior to the construction of the cloister, there was Cardinal Julius III Ciochi del Monte's residence. The future pope kept the Apollo Belvedere statue, discovered in Anzio, here until moving it to the Vatican. Archaeological research under the floor of the basilica has identified the remains of a **house** with multicoloured mosaics dating back to the second century BC. The sacristy has inlaid marble flooring which is believed to have originated from the Baths of Trajan.



The cloister

5. Walking, walking...

Returning to the Piazza, note the **tower** on the right that is erroneously associated with the Borgia family but in reality was the property of the Margani. The tower was built during the twelfth century, restructured during the fifteenth, and is now part of the bell tower of the nearby church of *San Francesco di Paola*. Also on the right, there is an arch with a staircase below; these are the so-called **steps of the Borgia**, which pass under an arch of the palace of the same name. The pathway, currently known as *via S. Francesco di Paola*, faithfully follows the Roman street *vicus Sceleratus*, which got its name from a legendary event. According to tradition, Tullia, daughter of Servius the sixth king of Rome, actually drove her chariot over her dead father's body on this road. Descend the stairs to reach Piazza S. Francesco di Paola, where it is possible to admire the façade of the so-called **Palace of the Borgia**. The façade features a *Serlian* (Palladian architectural feature) over the arch and the lower portion of a medieval tower on the left. At one time, this building

also belonged to the Margani, but popular tradition holds that Vannoza Cattanei, the mother of the children of Pope Alexander VI

Borgia, lived here. Immediately to the right of the palace, there is the **convent** of San Francesco da Paola, where a part of the *Istituto Centrale del Restauro* (Central Restoration Institute) is housed. Next is the façade of the church of **San Francesco di Paola**, the national church of the Calabrese. San Francesco di Paola, a native of Calabria, was a Franciscan at the age of twelve. He lived in the forests of the Sila and at nineteen founded the Order of the Minim for those who respected the most rigorous traditions of the Saint of Assisi. His most celebrated miracle is his crossing of the Straits of Messina by means of his cloak as a vessel. The church and convent were established in 1623 based on a design by Orazio Torriani and it was enlarged in 1650 following a donation by Olimpia Aldobrandini Pamphilj. The façade has two orders. During the eighteenth century, the lower order, partitioned into three parts by Ionic pilasters with che-

The Palace of the Borgia



San Francesco di Paola



San Francesco di Paola, tympanum

rubic heads and including the main entrance and two aedicule niches, was recovered in travertine. The upper order with its large central window and centralised tympanum remains in plastered brick. The interior has a single nave with stucco decorations created during the eighteenth century. The picturesque **high altar**, featuring a stucco drapery supported by angels, is a 1655 work of art by G. Antonio De Rossi. Prior to reaching the sacristy, there is the **burial monument to Lazzaro Pallavicini** by Ferdinando Fuga, whereas inside the same on the vault, there is the **Apparitions of the Virgin to St. Francis of Paola** by Sassoferato. In two niches, there are busts of **Christ** and **Madonna**, originating from a former church of the *Suburra*, the church of the Saviour ad *Tres Imagines*. Returning to via S. Francesco di Paola, descend the stairs to *via Cavour*, and go to the right in the direction of *Largo Visconti Venosta*.

The **Santi Gioacchino e Anna** church faces this large square. Originally, the church and annexed monastery were dedicated to St. Francis, but in 1760, Clement XIII had the complex demolished and rebuilt a church dedicated to St. Gioacchino. The church, designed by Francesco Fiori, is preceded by a flight of steps and has a façade that is divided by narrow Corinthian pilasters and surmounted by a double tympanum. The interior, decorated with stuc-

A column located in Piazza di S. Francesco di Paola

co and vaults with cherubs, is in the form of a Greek cross with the arms covered in barrel vault ceilings. It is believed that the church was built on the site where the **Temple and sacred woods of Juno the Queen**, protector of women in labour, was located during the Roman age. In the vicinity, there was also the temple of Mephitis, the goddess protector of springs. Exit from the church, take a right on *via in Selci*, and pass next to a building, which was annexed to the church in ancient times. This is the **ex-monastery of the Paolotte**, a former nunnery of the order of San Francesco di Paola and currently a commis-

Santi Gioacchino e Anna, façade*Santa Lucia in Selci, entrance to the monastery*

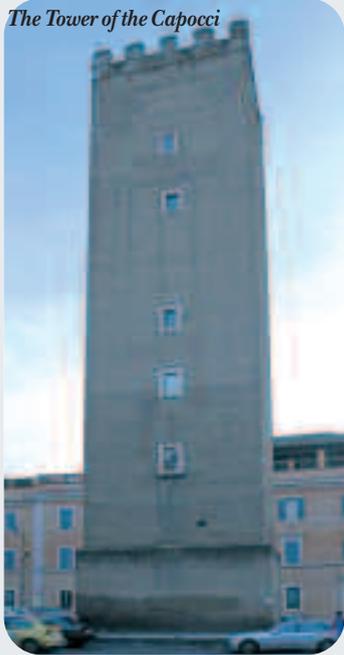
sary's office. In 1744, the monastery was the location for an extraordinary finding - a **Roman age treasure** consisting of sculptures, candelabras, precious equestrian harnesses, jewellery and silver. This was the ancient trousseau (dowry) belonging to *Secundus* and *Proiecta* of the Aproniani family. The trousseau was divided among various collections but common people conti-

Santa Lucia in Selci, main entrance of the church*Santa Lucia in Selci, the revolving wooden door*

nued to tell stories about the treasure and a mysterious Polish King. These tales are the reason that the name of the street to the right of the staircase ramp of the church of *Santi Gioacchino e Anna* is called *via del Monte Polacco*. Continue your journey along *via in Selci*, a street which corresponds to the higher part of the ancient *clivus Suburanus*. In ancient times, it connected the *Suburra* with the Esquiline and was also called "*in silice*", due to its flint paving. The **monastery** is located on the right side of the street and it was created by connecting continuous buildings including the annexed **church of Santa Lucia in Selci**. The primitive church was built at the end of the fifth century based on the desires of Pope Symmachus. During the thirteenth century, it was flanked by a Benedictine monastery which was substituted in 1568 by an Augustine monastery. The building was then reconstructed in 1604 by Carlo Maderno. Entry is through a seventeenth-century door surmounted by a multi-linear tympanum. There is a small **revolving wooden door** in the atrium that at one time was used to entrust abandoned babies to the convent. The single nave interior has a bar-

rel vaulted ceiling and three altars on each side. The counter-façade holds a **choir**, a work of art by Borromini, and an image of **God the Father**, painted by the Cavalier d'Arpino. The **high altar** is located in the rectangular apse. It was reconstructed during the nineteenth century by eliminating the previous one by Borromini. The only remaining feature of the Borromini altar is the grating. The extremely elegant **ciborium** is attributed to Maderno and at one time, it included multicoloured marble. In the first altar on the right, there is the **Martyrdom of Santa Lucia** by Giovanni Lanfranco, whereas in the first altar on the left, there is the **Chapel of Landi**, a work by Borromini. Leaving the church and continuing to the right on *via in Selci*, there are the remains of a brick façade dating back to the Roman age, which is visible in the walls of the convent, rising to the second floor. There is also a

The Tower of the Capocci



The Graziani Tower



portico built on travertine pillars and surmounted by arches. This was most likely a **basilica-like building** with five openings on to shops and five large windows and was sighted on a location called *Orpheia*. The name is derived from a famous fountain adorned with statues depicting the myth of Orpheus and Ganymede, which was described by Martial in his epigram and which would have been located in the current-day *Piazza di S. Martino ai Monti*. At the end of *via in Selci*, in *Piazza S. Martino ai Monti*, there is the Romanesque apse and sixteenth-century rear portal of the church of the same name. The **Capocci tower and the Graziani tower** are both located here as well. These towers were built with roman bricks most likely originating from the nearby Baths of Trajan. The tower at the centre of the square is 36.1 metres high with a square base and windows framed in travertine. It was originally built by the Arcioni family and then definitively passed to the Capocci. The smaller tower, visible to the left of the intersection between *via Lanza* and *via dei Quattro Cantoni* is a tower originally built by the Cerroni, a noble Roman family to which the celebrated painter Pietro Cavallini probably belonged. This building also passed hands several

times before becoming the property of the Graziani. A brief detour on *via dei Quattro Cantoni* will allow us to view the remains of an ancient noble villa. On the left side of the street, at no. 50, there is the **ex-Monastero delle Filippine**, previously the villa of the Sforza family and currently the location of government offices. The building dates back to the first half of the seventeenth century, however it had already passed to the Sisters of San Filippo Neri by the end of that century. Enclosed by a Rococo style railing, it is a majestic structure surmounted by a small belvedere tower, with a beautiful **double ramp staircase** leading to the main entrance. The first floor windows are surmounted by a double tympanum and decorated with the emblem of the Sforza family, the pomegranate. Returning to *piazza di S. Martino ai Monti*, take a left at the apse of the church onto *via Equizia*. This street's name is in memory of the ancient Equizi family, who owned the land on which the church was built. To the right, at the base of the eastern side of the church, there are some rows of tuff belonging to the ancient **Servian Wall**. Turning to the right again on *viale del Monte Oppio*, we find ourselves in front of the façade of the church of *San Martino ai Monti*.

The former Monastery of San Filippo Neri



6. San Martino ai Monti

The church is in fact titled to both Pope St. Sylvester and St. Martin, the bishop of Tours. Tradition holds that St. Sylvester converted Constantine to Christianity after having cured him of the plague. The placement of his feast day on 31 December is connected to the legend of his slaying a dragon that had overrun the Roman Forum, crushed by the establishment of a triumph, the saint had to descend a staircase with 365 steps, one for each day of the year. On the other hand, St. Martin is connected to the "Indians summer" at the beginning of November and is noted for having shared his cloak with a poor man who was cold (c. 370); he was consecrated as the bishop of Tours, where he led the diocese for 27 years. Upon his death, he had the people place him in a casket dressed only in a simple cloth. The church is also called *titulus Equitii* alluding to the *domus ecclesiae*, situated in the home of Equitius, presbyter of Pope Sylvester. In the area under the sacred building, there are the actual remains of a **building** dating back to the third century AD. The building consists of a grand central hallway with a cross vaulted ceiling on pillars, and an open vestibule with three doors to the street. During the sixth century, Pope Sym-

machus renovated the two adjoining churches of St. Martin of Tours and St. Sylvester. The churches were later demolished during the ninth century by Sergius II, who then reconstructed a single church entitled to both Saints using the columns from the previous buildings. Numerous spoils of the martyrs were collected in the crypt of Leo IV. The church underwent a profound restructuring by architect Filippo Gagliardi during the seventeenth century. Currently, a staircase leads to the Baroque **façade** with two orders featuring pilasters and a large triangular tympanum. To the sides of the central doorway, there are two bas-reliefs with the images of the **Saints Sylvester and Martin**. The interior, which has maintained its ancient basilica like structure, has a central nave and two aisles divided by 24 ancient Corinthian columns. The ceiling of the central nave substituted the ancient one donated by St. Carlo Borromeo, which was destroyed by fire. Among the more impor-



The apse



The large hall of the building beneath the church



San Martino ai Monti, façade



Detail of the room with the staircase leading to the underground chambers

tant works of art to be noted is the **Ecstasy of St. Carlo Borromeo** by Filippo Gherardi, located to the right of the entrance, and the **tabernacle and candelabra**, works of art by Francesco Belli on the high altar. Next to the altar, there is access to the **Baroque crypt**, a work by Filippo Gagliardi. The crypt features alternating columns and pillars, as well as stucco and statues of saints created by Paolo Naldini in 1655. Below the crypt, there is a ninth-century fresco with **Images of the saints and a bejewelled Cross** as well as an effigy of **St. Sylvester** in a sixth-century mosaic. In the right aisle at the first altar, there is **Santa Maria Madalena de' Pazzi** painted by Matteo Piccione in 1647. At the second altar, there is the **Ecstasy of Santa Teresa di Gesù** by Giovanni Greppi, and at the third, an eighteenth-century **St. Martin** by Fabrizio Chiari. In the left aisle, there is a fresco depicting the **Interior of St. Peter's basilica** painted by Gagliardi, and then a seventeenth-century **Landscape of the Roman Campagna** by Gaspare Dughet. Following

is the second altar with the painting of **St. Alberto Carmelitano**, a 1575 work of art by Girolamo Muziano. A successive fresco reconstructs the scene of the **Council of St. Sylvester**, in which the pope ordered the burning of all books contrary to the theological thoughts of the Catholic Church. At the first altar, there is a **St. Angelo** by Pietro Testa. Finally, there is another fresco featuring the architectural features of the **Interior of the basilica of San Giovanni in Laterano** prior to Borromini's renovations. At the beginning of the aisle, there is a 1651 fresco by Jan Miel of **San Cyril baptising a sultan**. In the sacristy, there is a **silver votive lamp**, a papal tiara attributed to St. Sylvester, and a bishop's mitre.

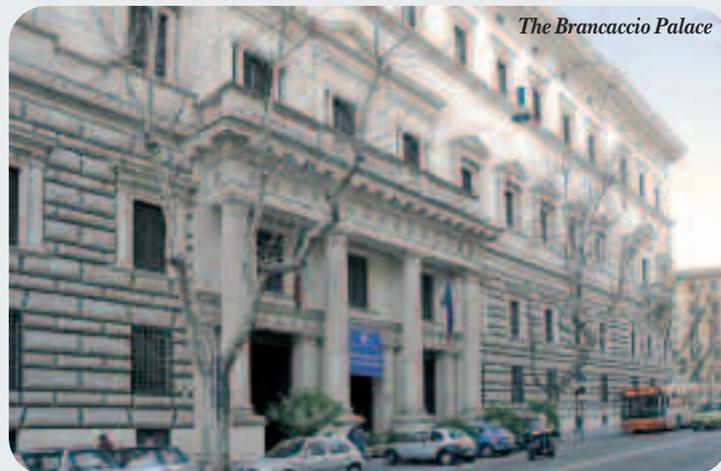
7. Walking, walking...

Exit the church of **San Martino ai Monti**, take a left and continue to the end of **viale del Monte Oppio**. The impressive **Palazzo**

Brancaccio is located on the right. This is a monumental building created by the rich American family of Princess Mary Elisabeth Field Brancaccio. The family acquired the former convent of **Santa Maria della Purificazione ai Monti** from the State and then hired architect Luca Carimini to adapt and transform it, a project which ran from 1886 to 1912. The magnificent apartments were decorated under the direction of painter Francesco Gai, an exponent of the eclectic style at the end of the nineteenth century. A part of the palace currently hosts the **Museo Nazionale d'Arte Orientale (National Museum for Oriental Art)**, built in 1957 with collections acquired in an agreement between the Ministry of Public Education and the ISIAO (Italian Institute for Africa and the Orient). The museum, which had among its principal promoters the celebrated scholar G. Tucci, exhibits material from Italian missions to the Orient as well as objects which were donated, traded or acquired from antique markets. The

museum covers from 4000 BC to the nineteenth century and consists of **sixteen halls** in which approximately 26,000 objects are exhibited,

making the collection one of the most important in Europe. The museum is divided into the following sections: **Ancient Near and Middle East, Tibet and Nepal, China, Islamic Art and Archaeology and India and Gandhara**. There are also collections relative to Japan, Korea and South-East Asia. Opposite the palace, at the corner of the intersection with **viale Mecenate** is **Teatro Brancaccio**, which was built in 1916 and is still operating today. Cross over **Largo Brancaccio**, and continue to the left on **viale Merulana**. This street was made famous in the novel by Carlo Emilio 'Gadda' *Quer pasticciaccio brutto de via Merulana* (*That Awful Mess on Via Merulana*). Continue straight until reaching the staircase of the Church of **San Alfonso de' Liguori**. The church was built in 1859 on the site of Villa Castani by George Wigley and was the first example of *Gothic revival* in Rome. The interior has a central nave, two aisles and features a painted panel dating back to the second half of the fifteenth century depicting the

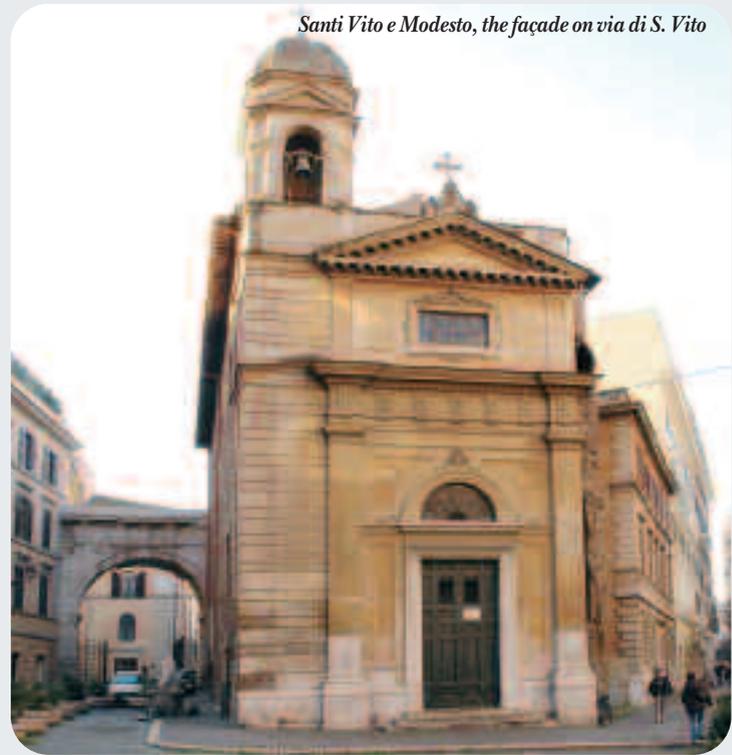


The Brancaccio Palace

The Brancaccio Theatre

Madonna of Perpetual Help. Continuing beyond *Largo S. Alfonso*, take a right on *via di S. Vito*, where at the end of the street, there is the small façade of the **Santi Vito e Modesto Church**. The most ancient structure of this church dates back to the end of the fourth century. Due to its proximity to the ancient *Macellum* (market) of Livia, the church had the name *San Vito in Macello* until the end of the ninth century. Abandoned for a long period, it was finally reconstructed in 1477 by Sixtus IV near the ancient building. The simple façade and the marble door with the abraded coat

of arms and the engraving: *Sixtus fundavit 1477* belong to this era of the church's history. Over the course of the nineteenth century and primarily, in celebration of the 1900 Jubilee, the church sustained far reaching renovations. Its orientation was even changed with the creation of a new façade on *via Carlo Alberto*. However, restorations in 1977 restored the aspect and orientation created by Sixtus. The extremely simple interior consists of a rectangular room that finishes with an apse, containing two lateral altars in its interior and a fifteenth-century aedicule (shrine). In the altar to the right under the arch, there is a fresco of the **Madonna with Child and saints**, which is attributed to Antoniazio Romano. In the church behind a grate, there is the so-called **pietra scellerata** (wicked stone), a roman funeral cippus which is said to have originated from the location of the martyrdom of the patron saints. The stone, considered miraculous, cures people with rabies when it is scrapped and the dust is inhaled by those afflicted with the disease. The **Arch of Gallieno** stands to the right of the church and is the sole remaining element of *Porta Esquilina*, an opening in the perimeter of the Servian Wall that originally had three arches. The remaining fornix, flanked by two Corinthian pilasters, was

San Alfonso de' Liguori, façade*Santi Vito e Modesto, the façade on via di S. Vito*

part of a renovation under Augustus. According to the inscription under the attic, the arch was dedicated in 262 AD to the Emperor Gallieno and the

Empress Salonina by M. Aurelius Victor. Passing the arch, on the left at the end of *via di S. Vito*, there is the graceful travertine fountain of the **Rione di Monti** (nei-

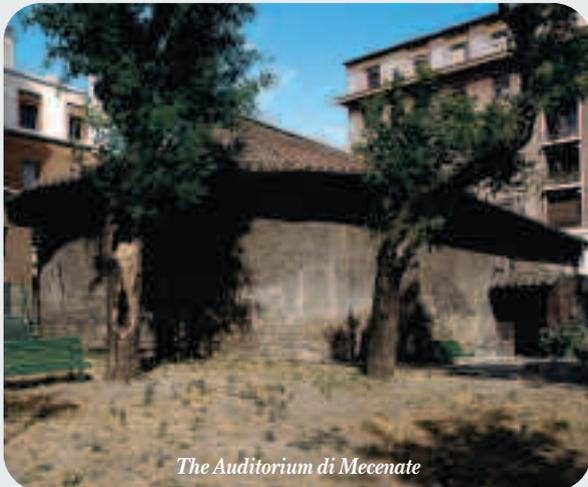
Santi Vito e Modesto, the façade next to the Arch of Gallieno



Fountain of the Rione di Monti

ghbourhood of Monti), built in 1927 by P. Lombardi. Return to *via Merulana*, take a right and continue until reaching *Largo Leopardi*. At the centre of the square, protected by a fence is the so-called **Auditorium di Mecenate**. Discovered in 1874, the hall is partially underground, apsidal with a barrel vault and has a dimension of 24.4 x 10.6 metres. Along the longer side, there are six rectangular niches. Above the apse, there are five niches which are also rectangular, preceded by a staircase which in ancient times was covered by slabs of *cipollino* marble.

Initially the building was thought to be an *auditorium*. However, the remains of tubing allowing water to be channelled down a short slope have now identified it as a *coenatio estiva* (open dining hall). This place would have belonged to a



The Auditorium di Mecenate

vast residential complex and along with a nearby fountain would have allowed feasting guests to take refuge from the heat. Due the presence of the *opus reticulatum* (rectangle brickwork), we know the building dates back to the period between the end of Rome's republican era to the beginning of the imperial age. It underwent at least two restructurings as the decorative inlay *opus sectile* flooring placed over the original and the brick walling at the base of the cavea testify. On the walls, there are the remains, although in a rather battered state, of **frescoes** depicting gardens, trees and birds. These designs are similar to the types found in the Villa of Livia in the ad *Gallinas Albas* near *Prima Porta* on *via Flaminia* and now housed at the Museo Nazionale Romano at Palazzo Massimo. It is likely that the nymphaeum was a part of the *Horti Maecenatiani*, the villa that Mecenate constructed around 30 BC when, after improvements were made on the ancient burial ground, the area began to fill with splendid villas. Upon the death of Mecenate, the villa became a part of the Imperial domain and the favourite residence of Tiberius.

8. The Trofei di Mario and Porta Magica

From *Largo Leopardi*, take a left on the street of the same name and continue until reaching Piazza Vittorio Emanuele II. The square, which is simply called Piazza Vittorio by Romans, was designed by the architect Paniconi in 1871. It was part of the residential neighbourhood constructed for the bureaucracy that flowed to the new capital of the Kingdom of Italy. Various architects, including Gaetano Koch, contributed to its completion approximately ten years later. This is the only porticoed square in a "Piedmontese" style in Rome. The garden at the centre which is still surrounded by its original railing was the creation of Carlo Tenerani. Until a few years ago, the area around the garden was filled by a large market that opened at the beginning of the twentieth century but has now found a new location in a nearby covered building. Inside the **garden**, named in memory of Nicola Calipari, there are the remains of a grand public work of art that was built during

the third century under Emperor Alexander Severus. The ruins, erroneously called the **Trofei di Mario (Trophies of Marius)** are what remain of a monumental fountain that also had the practical function of distributing water originating from the Claudius aqueduct. The name of the building, *nymphaeum Alexandri*, appears in a list of public works drafted during the Constantine age. During the first half of the twelfth century, the ruins were renamed the "Trofei di Mario" due to presence of two **marble monuments** depicting barbaric arms that were associated with the victory of Gaius Marius over the Cimbri and Teutoni. However, the two sculptures, transferred in 1590 to the balustrade of the Campidoglio, did not originally belong to the fountain either. In fact, the trophies are from the Domitian era and were built to commemorate the victory over the Chatti and the Dacians in 89 AD. The fountain, built at the point where the ancient roads of *via Labicana*



The portico of Piazza Vittorio Emanuele II



The railing surrounding the garden of Nicola Calipari

and *Collatina* forked, had a trapezoidal design and was built of brick. Funds from the time of Alexander Severius allowed for the embellishment of the fountain's façade that rose three stories with a series of niches filled with statues and an attic adorned with a bronze *quadriga* (chariot drawn by a four-horse team). A basin collected water that flowed through three frontal and two side channels. It was still

operating during the sixth century, but with the cutting of the aqueduct by the Goths of Vitige, the monument began its state of abandonment. It was definitively abandoned with the introduction of the city's new water system. From the sixteenth century to the eighteenth century, the fountain was depicted by various artists but the first systematic cataloguing was only performed by the French Aca-



The so-called Trophies of Marius in the Calipari garden

demy in 1821. There is a statue located within the Calipari garden to the right of the ruins. This **statue** was conceived by the sculptor Mario Rutelli to adorn the fountain of the Naiads in piazza Esedra that was later substituted by the current works of the same artist. Behind the Trophies, there is a **War monument in memory of the soldiers of the Esquilino** who died during the 1915-18 conflict. It was created by Guido Carafa. The so-called **Porta Magica (Magic Door)** is located next to the ruins on the right. This door, which features some alchemic formulae engraved in its frame accompanied by

a sentence in Hebrew and Latin, is the remains of a secondary entrance to the Villa del Marquis Massimiliano Palombara di Pietraforte. According to tradition, the



Trophies formerly of Marius, now located on the balustrade of the Campidoglio

formula was given by a mysterious visitor to the marquis who was an important seventeenth century alchemist. Around 1680, Palombara placed the door in the secret garden of his villa and performed numerous experiments there. Following its demolition at the end of the nineteenth century for new buildings on the Esquilino, the door was moved to Piazza Vittorio, and flanked by **two ancient statues** of the Egyptian god Bes, which originated from the excavations on the Quirinal in 1888. The so-called *Discobolo Lancellotti* (Lancellotti Disc-thrower) a

Roman age copy of the fifth-century BC bronze original by Myron was found in 1781 at the same Villa Palombara.



Statue by M. Rutelli in the Calipari garden



The so-called Porta Magica

9.
walking,
walking...

At the corner of **Piazza Vittorio** and the beginning of *via Napoleone III*, the **San Eusebio Church** is tucked between Umbertini buildings. The house, where the Roman presbyter and grand opponent of Arianism died in 357 AD, was quickly transformed in *titulus* and consecrated by Pope Liberius. Archaeological excavations under the church have effectively identified the remains of a **second century AD residence**. The church was restored on several occasions beginning in the eighteenth century and then during the thirteenth century when Gregory IX, who almost completely reconstructed it. The bell tower dating back to the time of Honorius III and the apse, which is no longer visible from the exterior, are the only Romanesque period elements to have survived. The central staircase and two lateral ramps leading to the church, remain slightly elevated due to the nineteenth-century excavations for the construction of the Piazza. The **façade**, with two orders, is an eighteenth-century work by Carlo Stefano Fontana. At the base, there is a **portico** with five arches supported by pillars, whereas in the second order,

which is separated from the first by a projecting frame, there are pilasters surmounted by Ionic capitals and five windows with frames and tympanums showing Borromini's influence. Above the dedicatory inscription, the façade concludes with a balustrade adorned by four statues of saints to the sides and two angels kneeling in the middle with a grand tympanum surmounted by a metal cross slightly behind them. In the portico, there are some **tablets**, including one which recalls the dedication of the church to Saints Eusebius and Vincent by Pope Gregory IX in 1238. The interior, which maintains the ancient Romanesque three nave structure despite the drastic alterations during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, features decorations in stucco and gold. Notable artwork includes the fresco on the vault of the central nave depicting the **Glory of St. Eusebius**, a 1759 work by the grand neoclassical painter Anton Raphael Mengs. On the high altar, created by Onorio Longhi, there is a depiction of the **Madonna consoler of the afflicted** attributed to Pompeo Batoni. On the two altars of the presbytery, there are two

The Pontificio Collegio Russicum (Russian Pontifical College)



depictions one of **St. Celestine**, a work by Ruthard, and the other, **St. Benedict** by Cesare Rossetti. Three paintings are conserved in the seventeenth-century **wooden choir seating**, which also contains a richly sculptured lectern in walnut. The paintings include the **Assumption** by an unknown artist; the **Madonna among St. Eusebius, St. Vincent and a Seraph** by Baldassarre Croce, and **Mary and Mary Magdalena at the foot of the cross** by Rossetti. Next to the church is the ex-convent, which is currently a police station. The building hosted one of the first printing offices opened in Rome until the end of the fifteenth century. Inside, there is still the **brick cloister** with two orders of arches and a central fountain built by Domenico Fontana in 1588. Every year on 17 January, in celebration of the feast of San Antonio Abate, the protector of animals, numerous dogs and cats along with their owners crowd in front of this church to receive the traditional blessing. At one time, this blessing was primarily given to the horses of elegant noble carriages at the nearby church on *via Napoleone III*, which was entitled to the saint and is now incorporated into the *Russicum Pontifical College*. Exit from

San Eusebio, take a left and go back along the entire length of Piazza Vittorio until reaching the intersection with *via Lamarmora*. Continue along this street, then successively along *via Guglielmo Pepe* until reaching *via Giovanni Giolitti*. Take a right and go a short distance until reaching the

church of **Santa Bibiana**. The location of this ancient sacred building has been heavily altered due to the presence of a railway embankment and buildings belonging to Termini Station. The church was built in 468 by Pope Simplicius on the home of the martyr St. Bibiana, who was killed by flagellation in 363 during the persecution of Julian the Apostate. In 1224, the church was restored by Honorius III and a monastery was added that was occupied by Benedictine nuns until the end of 1440 and demolished during the seventeenth century. During the 1625 Jubilee celebrations, Urban VIII assigned Gian Lorenzo Bernini, who was not yet thirty years old, to renovate the church whilst keeping its original architectonic structure. The internal restorations and the creation of the baroque façade, which constitutes the architectural debut of Bernini, were completed in a mere two years. The **façade** features a **portico** with three

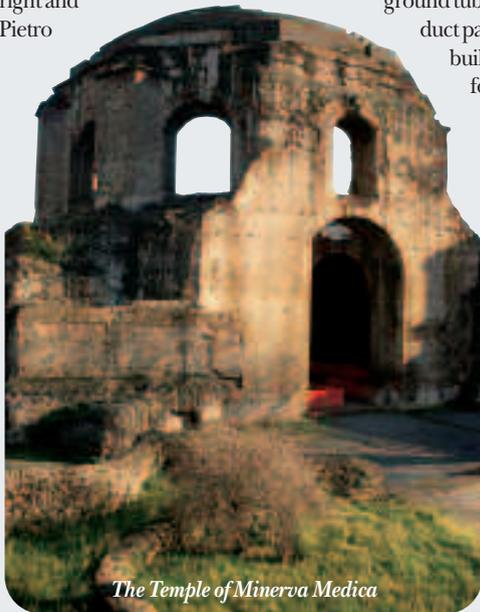
San Eusebio, façade



Santa Bibiana



arches supported by Ionic travertine pillars in the lower part, whereas in the upper portion, the central loggia is framed by a large rectangular niche, crowned by a tympanum and flanked by two wings with windows and balustrades. The interior features a central nave and two aisles divided by ancient granite and white marble columns in composite and Corinthian styles. In the side aisles, a portion of the medieval wall is still visible. Under the high altar, there is an **alabaster sarcophagus** from the Constantine age that preserves the bodies of Santa Bibiana, her sister Demetria and their mother Dafrosa. Above the altar in a niche, there is a marble statue of **St. Bibiana**, which was sculptured by Bernini in 1626. To the sides of the high altar, there are two small **chapels** dedicated to **St. Dafrosa** on the right with an altarpiece created by Pietro da Cortona and to **St. Demetria** on the left with an altarpiece by Agostino Ciampelli. In the central nave, there are frescoes with **Scenes from the life of the Saint** created by Agostino Ciampelli on the right and Pietro



The Temple of Minerva Medica

da Cortona on the left. To the left of the central doorway is the **column** to which, according to tradition, the saint was bound during her martyrdom. The **musical Angels** in the counter-façade are works by Agostino Ciampelli. Returning yet again to *via Giolitti* with Termini station to the left, continue straight until reaching the imposing structure of the so-called **Temple of Minerva Medica**. This name, used for the first time during the sixteenth century by Pirro Ligorio, is inaccurate. The name was derived from the in loco finding of the statue of the so-called **Athena Giustiniani**, now housed at the Vatican Museums. The building is actually the residual portion of a hall with a pentagonal shape that was 25 metres across and featured ten large windows. The entrance was preceded by an atrium forcipes (terminating with two apses at the extremities) while semi-circular rooms were placed outside the hall. The **domed roof**, a large part of which collapsed in 1828, features ten brick ribs on the interior and four levels of rings on the exterior. The underground tubing of the *Anio Vetus* aqueduct passed near the pavilion. The building, datable back to the fourth century AD, was identified as the nymphaeum of the *Horti Liciniani*, the large villa on the Esquiline that took its name from Emperor Licinius Gallienus. The villa was an extensive property containing enough buildings to host all members of the court when the emperor resided there. The structural characteristics of the building advanced the developments of the Byzantine period and created a model for Renaissance and Baroque architecture.

CAPOLINEA

How to get there...

Piazza del Colosseo:

3 - 60 - 75 - 81 - 85 - 87 - **117** - 175 - **271** - **571** - 673 - **810** - **850** - Metro B

Via Giovanni Lanza:

75 - 84 - Metro B

Piazza Vittorio Emanuele:

5 - 14 - 360 - 649 - Metro A

Key:

The numbers in **bold** show the start/end of a line (e.g. **70**)
 Numbers that are **underlined** show trams (e.g. 3)
 Numbers in **green** show lines that only run on weekdays (e.g. **30**)
 Numbers in **red** show lines that only run on weekends and holidays (e.g. **130**)



ROMA CAPITALE

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Tourists Information Points (PITs)

AIRPORTS

- **Ciampino "G. B. Pastine" Airport of Rome**

International Arrivals - baggage claim area

Daily 9:00am / 6:30pm

- **Fiumicino Leonardo Da Vinci Airport**

International Arrivals - Terminal T3

Daily 8:00am / 7:30pm

Daily 9:30am / 7:00pm

- **Castel Sant'Angelo**

Lungotevere Vaticano - (Piazza Pia)

- **Minghetti**

Via Marco Minghetti - (corner of Via del Corso)

- **Fori**

Visitor Center, Via dei Fori Imperiali

- **Leopardi**

at the Tourism Department of Rome Capital

Via Leopardi, 24 - from monday to friday

- **Ostia Lido**

Lungomare Paolo Toscanelli - (corner of Piazza Anco Marzio)

from May to September

- **Tiburtina**

Tiburtina Train Station - **next opening**

Daily 8:00am / 7:30pm

- **Termini Train Station**

Via Giovanni Giolitti, 34

Inside Building F / Platform 24

Roma Capitale - Turismo

Via Leopardi, 24 – 00185 Roma

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