

DISCOVERING THE ORANGE GARDEN

During the Middle Ages, Rome saw great conflicts. The most powerful families of Rome tried to gain the best positions from which they might control swathes of the city. To do so, they constructed siege-proof strongholds. In the thirteenth century, the Savelli family settled on the Aventine Hill, where they built a castle (of which only the perimeter walls remain).

This structure corresponds to the outer walls of the Giardino degli Aranci, or Orange Garden. Given its view, this is one of the most well known terraces of Rome. The garden was created in 1932 by the architect, Raffaele De Vico. It rests on the foundations of the stronghold which had disappeared some hundreds of years before. The idea that oranges should grow here is a homage to Saint Dominic de Guzmán who founded the neighbouring religious house at Santa Sabina. Jep Gambardella came here as dawn broke at the end of one of his solitary walks. From the outside, he sees a nun picking oranges from a tree, as though the area belonged to the convent. Actually, it's a public park, managed by Roma Capitale.

For visitors

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