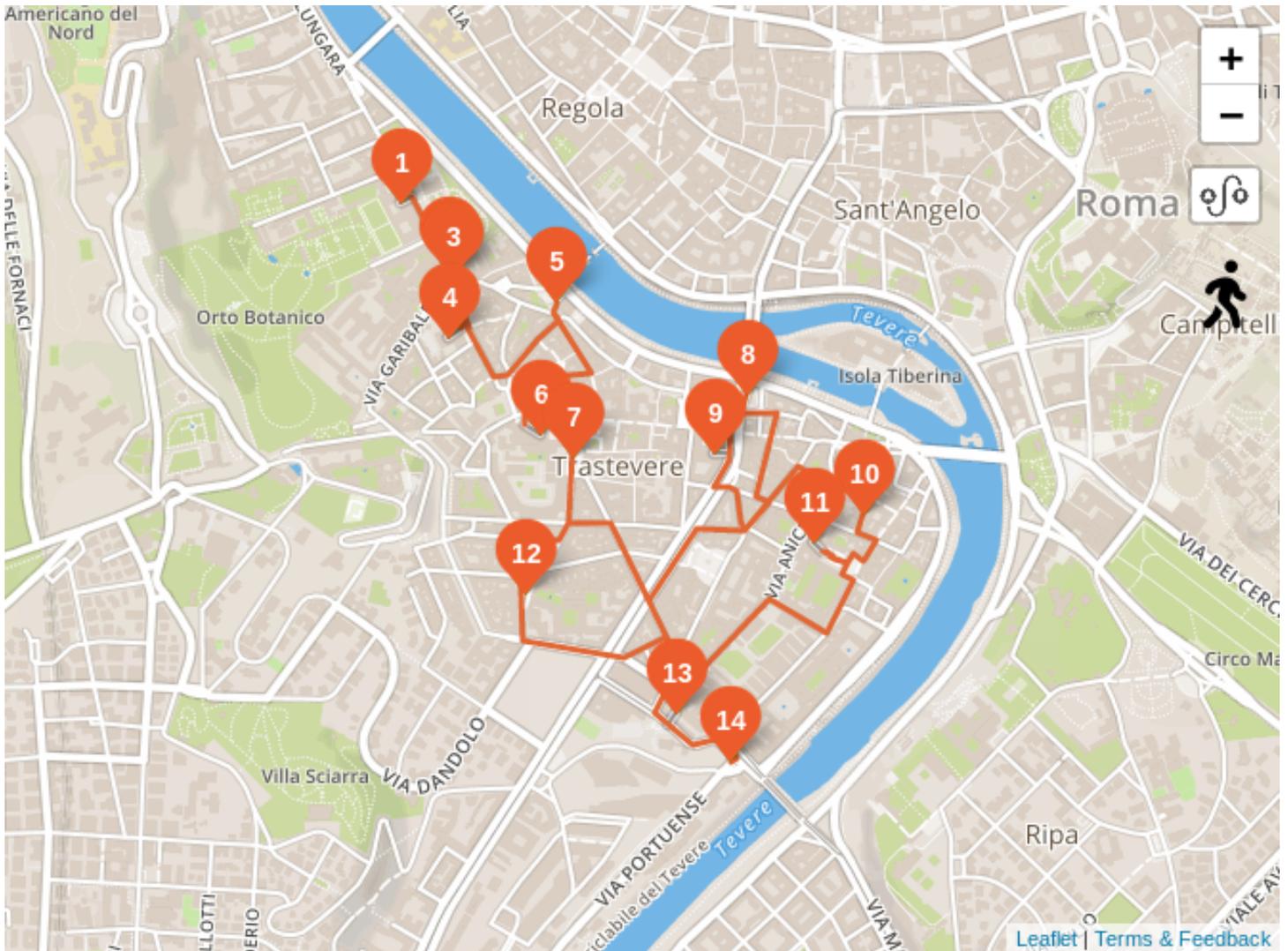




Trastevere art and history

A walk into trastevere art and history self guided itinerary



Itinerary description:

Leave the traditional Roman restaurants and nightlife spots in order to unveil the opulent cultural heritage of Trastevere veracious neighborhood. Thanks to this self-guided walking tour in Trastevere, you'll re-discover its medieval roots, still entrapped in magnificent historic sites such as the Torre degli Anguillara and the renowned basilica di Santa Maria in Trastevere, founded on the site where a prodigious eruption of oil from the soil is believed to be happened around 38 B.C. Moreover, this Trastevere walk will take you to find the lesser-known gem of chiesa di San Francesco a Ripa Grande, where Saint Francis of Assisi was probably hosted and now housing a sculpture masterpiece by Baroque artist Gian Lorenzo Bernini.

Live the breathtaking emotion of reaching the threshold with Ancient Rome since you'll explore the picturesque vicolo dell'Atleta where the spectacular finding of the Apoxyomenos statue now housed in the Vatican Museums happened or venture underground to explore the archaeological site beneath the basilica di Santa Cecilia in Trastevere or the Paleo-Christian remains buried under the basilica di San Crisogono.

Breath the still palpable artistic inspiration passing by the house of the great Renaissance artist Raphael's muse and lover, the legendary Fornarina, and admire the original aspect of a noble "quadreria" at the painting gallery inside Palazzo Corsini.

Immerse yourself among the characteristic alleys of Trastevere and time travel back to the genuine old heart of Rome!

Tour settings:

Travel time : 4 h

Total waypoints : 14

Tickets cost : 12 €

Dress style : casual for outdoor and proper dresscode for sites of worship

For family : yes

Ladders : yes

Low visibility: yes

Steep: yes

Highlights:

Basilica di S. Maria in Trastevere, Piazza Trilussa, Galleria Nazionale di Arte Antica in Palazzo Corsini, Pietro Cavallini's frescoes,

Hidden gems:

La Fornarina's house, Carlo Saraceni's altarpiece, Vicolo dell'atleta, Blessed Ludovica Albertoni by Gian Lorenzo Bernini

1) Palazzo Corsini



Address : Via della Lungara, 10, 00165 Roma RM

Duration : 30 minutes

Openings:

Mon : 08:30 : 19:00

Tue : 08:30 : 19:00

Wed : 08:30 : 19:00

Thu : 08:30 : 19:00

Fri : 08:30 : 19:00

Sat : 08:30 : 19:00

Overview:

The powerful Riario family, who were related to Sisto IV (Francesco della Rovere, 1471-1484), built the early nucleus of the palace in the XV century. The original building, on two floors, was constructed to a horseshoe plan with two wings protruding from the rear which bordered the courtyard, which opened onto the garden. Two avenues with statues, fountains and labyrinths led up the slopes of the Janiculum to the summit. The palace was modified when it became the residence of Queen Cristina of Sweden between 1669 and 1689, and the circle that formed the Accademia dell'Arcadia held meetings there. In 1736, it was bought by the Corsini, the family of Pope Clemente XII (Lorenzo Corsini, 1730-1740), who commissioned the Florentine architect, Ferdinando Fuga to completely renovate the palace and its gardens to make the residency worthy of its new status. Constructed between 1736 and 1770, the palace was one of the most important examples of the architecture of eighteenth century Rome. Fuga incorporated the existing building with the long main façade on Via della Lungara, where he increased the original partition and opened up the majestic triple-arched portal, surmounted by a balcony supported by corbels and three windows with the coat-of-arms of the Corsini. On the first floor are windows with rounded tympanum and characteristic conch shell embellishments. The portal leads to the majestic entrance hall and then to the garden, ending at the botanical garden established in 1883. The rear facade duplicated the layout of protruding wings of the sixteenth century building, joined by courtyards with porticos, Here lay the garden that exploited the slopes of the Janiculum with labyrinths, cascading fountains with statues and niches bearing the rose emblem of the Riario. Originally, the garden reached the summit of the hill where the Renaissance Lodge of the Riario stood, demolished to make way for the monument to Garibaldi. The seat of the embassy of the Directory of revolutionary France, it hosted Giuseppe Bonaparte and General Duphot, killed in the tumult between the palace and the Porta Settimina, the pretext for the occupation by Berthier and the expulsion of Pope Pio VI (Giovannagelo Braschi, 1775-1799). Sold in 1883 to the Italian State, today it houses the National Gallery of Ancient Art and the headquarters of the Accademia dei Lincei.

Description:

The long perspectival wing of the Palazzo Corsini overlooks via della Lungara, roughly parallel to the Tiber river.

This façade was designed by the eminent architect Ferdinando Fuga according to the preexisting building and the light architectural partition, marked by the rhythm of the windows, forewarns a Neoclassical order.

The original edifice was built by the cardinal Raffaele Riario, member of pope Sisto IV Della Rovere's family, between ca. 1510-1512 and it housed in the 17th century Christina, Queen of Sweden, who founded here a cultural academy.

Around 1736, the palace was acquired by the Corsini family who intended to set-up here their library and paintings gallery.

In the 18th century, the architect Ferdinando Fuga intervened several times to transform and enlarge the complex. Around 1738, Fuga restored the old Palazzo Riario, then between 1744 and 1747 he built the library wing as symmetrical to the existing palace. At a later time (1749-1753), he connected the two building blocks and between 1755 and 1758 he completed the back section. In the mid-19th century the complex underwent some changes and

restoration works.

Since 1883, the complex has been a property of the Italian state and it's both seat of the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei and one of the two seats of the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica, together with Palazzo Barberini.

The museum inside Palazzo Corsini is accessible from the civic number 10.

A hallway decorated with ancient busts leads to the entrance hall decorated with a group of statues from the Torlonia collection dating to the 19th century, together with some ancient ones. The group sculpture depicting Cleopatra by Pietro Paolo Olivieri (ca. 1574) is placed in the center of the elegant space.

You can enter the museum from the portal located on the right side of the entrance hall and admire the gallery set-up, which recalls the original aspect of a noble "quadreria", displaying the paintings in overlapping lines to embellish the entire wall.

The painting collection, started by the cardinal Neri Corsini, nephew of pope Clemente XII Corsini, is a rare example of a 18th century collection in Rome that has survived almost intact, also enriched in the following centuries by Flemish and Italian masterpiece of the 16th and 17th century according to a coherent museological and museographic project.

The luxuriant garden of the palace houses the Orto Botanico, featuring about 3500 plant species and extending on a surface of about 12000 m2.

Just in front of Palazzo Corsini, the entrance to the Renaissance Villa della Farnesina is open on the opposite side of via della Lungara.



2) Porta Settimiana

Address : Via di Porta Settimiana, 00165 Roma RM

Duration : 5 minutes

Openings:

Overview:

Porta Settimiana marks the beginning of Via della Lungara in Trastevere. The ancient Porta Septiminiana, one of the minor gates of the circuit of the Aurelian Walls, was completely rebuilt in 1498 by Pope Alessandro VI (Rodrigo Borgia, 1492-1503) in the characteristic layout crowned by Ghibelline battlements with corbels. In 1798, Pio VI (Giovannangelo Braschi, 1755-1799) ordered the restoration of the structure of the gate, giving it its present appearance. To the left of the arch is the devotional altar under the sacred image of a fresco, which is poorly preserved.

Description:

Later re-built and restored, Porta Settimiana was originally a postern belonging to the Aurelian Walls, built between 271 AD and 275 AD during the reign of the Roman Emperors Aurelian and Probus. The present aspect of Porta Settimiana dates to the Renaissance, since it was re-built by pope Alessandro VI Borgia around 1498 in the place of the postern belonging to the Aurelian Walls. Pope Pio VI Braschi restored it in 1798. It is characterized by a simple fornix and crowned by a Ghibelline crenellation with corbels.





3) Casa della Fornarina

Address : Via di Santa Dorotea, 19A-20, 00153 Roma RM

Duration : 5 minutes

Openings:

Overview:

The Casa della Fornarina, located at Via di Santa Dorotea at the civic numbers 19A-20, is a Renaissance house built upon previous medieval structures and including re-used ancient columns.



Description:

The so-called "Casa della Fornarina", consisting of a Renaissance house built upon previous medieval structure and including re-used ancient columns is believed to be the house of Margherita Luti (by the mid-eighteenth century referred to as La Fornarina, "the baker's daughter"), the widowed daughter of Francesco Luti of Siena, who became the lover and model of Renaissance master Raffaello Sanzio. She succeeded in conquering the artist's heart for his entire life, notwithstanding that, according to Vasari, Raphael was a "very amorous man and affectionate towards the ladies". She became his muse for many paintings and also sonnets attributed to the artist, dedicated to the Petrarchan theme of ideal love. Margherita remained attached to his love for the rest of her life, too: a document discovered in 1897 mentioned that Margherita retired to the Convent of Santa Apollonia four months after Raphael's premature death at the age of only 37 years.



4) Chiesa di Santa Maria della Scala

Address : Piazza della Scala, 23, 00153 Roma RM

Duration : 15 minutes

Openings:

Mon : 10:00 : 13:00 16:00 : 19:00

Tue : 10:00 : 13:00 16:00 : 19:00

Wed : 10:00 : 13:00 16:00 : 19:00

Thu : 10:00 : 13:00 16:00 : 19:00

Fri : 10:00 : 13:00 16:00 : 19:00

Sat : 10:00 : 13:00 16:00 : 19:00

Sun : 16:00 : 19:00

Overview:

Besides the valuable architecture and the several artworks adorning the chiesa di Santa Maria della Scala, built between the 16th and the 17th centuries, you'll have the chance to admire the "Transit of the Virgin", probably by Carlo Saraceni and assistants, which substituted the altarpiece by Caravaggio now at the Louvre Museum.

Description:

The building of the church of Santa Maria della Scala, begun around 1593 by the architect Francesco Capriani da Volterra to house a miraculous icon of the Virgin Mary, was accomplished in 1610 and then restored in 1851. The façade, completed in 1624 according to the typology spread in Rome in the second half of the 16th century, is constituted by a double overlapping order of pediments and a central projecting section. A statue of the Virgin Mary with child dating to 1633 is located in a niche over the portal.

The interior of the church is adorned with several precious paintings on the altars of the side chapels. The second chapel on the left side of the church, designed by Girolamo Rainaldi, houses the recently restored "Transit of the Virgin" probably painted by Carlo Saraceni and assistants. Saraceni was a talented and original Venetian painter, active in the cosmopolitan environment of Rome at the time of Caravaggio. His altarpiece in fact substituted the artwork on the same subject executed by Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, which was rejected by the friars and it's now on display at the Louvre Museum in Paris.

The Carmelite convent annexed to the church was built at the beginning of the 17th century and is partially attributed to Matteo Bartolini, called Matteo da Castello, who is believed to have designed the big cloister, while the building running alongside the street and the little cloister are attributed to Ottaviano Mascherino. At the second level of the convent the "speziaria", the ancient pharmacy finely conserved with its furniture dating to the 17th century, is open to visitors.



5) Piazza Trilussa



Address : Piazza Trilussa, 00153 Roma RM

Duration : 5 minutes

Openings:

Mon : 00:00 : 24:00

Tue : 00:00 : 24:00

Wed : 00:00 : 24:00

Thu : 00:00 : 24:00

Fri : 00:00 : 24:00

Sat : 00:00 : 24:00

Sun : 00:00 : 24:00

Overview:

Piazza Trilussa was arranged at the end of the 19th century and it's dominated by the elegant fornix of Fontana dell'Acqua Paola, also called the Fontana dei Cento Preti (or "Fontanone di ponte Sisto").

Description:

Piazza Trilussa is embellished with the fountain which was built around 1613 by Jan van Santen, known in Italy as Giovanni Vasanzio, in collaboration with Giovanni Fontana. A branch of the ancient Trajan's acqueduct, extended and restored by pope Paolo V Borghese (hence its other name "Acquedotto Traiano-Paolo"), supplies this fountain which was commissioned by the same pope. The original location of the fountain was at the end of the Renaissance via Giulia, on the other side of the Tiber river but it was moved on the occasion of the building of the Tiber embankments around 1898.

On the right side of the piazza, the monument dedicated to Trilussa, pseudonym of "Romanesco" poet Carlo Alberto Salustri (1871-1950), features a bronze bust executed around 1954 by the sculptor Lorenzo Ferri.



6) Basilica di Santa Maria in Trastevere



Address : Piazza di Santa Maria in Trastevere, 00153 Roma RM

Duration : 20 minutes

Openings:

Mon : 07:30 : 21:00

Tue : 07:30 : 21:00

Wed : 07:30 : 21:00

Thu : 07:30 : 21:00

Fri : 07:30 : 21:00

Sat : 07:30 : 21:00

Sun : 07:30 : 21:00

Overview:

The church arose on the site of an ancient building of Christian worship (Titulus Callisti) constructed on the orders of Pope Callisto I (217-222) at the point where, in 38 B.C., a prodigious outflow of oil spurted from the ground (fons olei), interpreted in the early centuries of Christianity as a sign of the coming of the Messiah. Restructured in the IV century in the high Middle Ages, the building was rebuilt under Innocenzo II (1130-43) and embellished with lateral chapels between the XVI and XVIII centuries. In 1702, Clemente XI (Giovanni Francesco Albani, 1700-21) entrusted to Carlo Fontana the commission to build the portico in front of the façade, divided into five arches surmounted by a balustrade with statues of the popes. The upper part of the façade, like the bell tower, is from the Romanesque period (with the exception of the windows, constructed in the second half of the XIX century) and features a crowning cornice with a concave profile surmounted by a triangular tympanum. The cornice is decorated with a mosaic of the XIII century depicting the enthroned Madonna alongside female figures. The interior preserves the original plan of the XII century in the division in three naves by means of architraved colonnades and is one of the major examples of monumental religious architecture obtained with the reuse of ancient materials (largely from the Baths of Caracalla). In the apse, below the canopy decorated with a mosaic of the XII century depicting the enthroned Virgin with Christ and the Saints, the mosaic panels are preserved with the Stories of the Virgin that were produced by Pietro Cavallini in 1291.

Description:

In the heart of the homonym piazza, the basilica di Santa Maria in Trastevere is considered among the earliest churches to be officially open to Catholic worship in Rome. According to the tradition, it was founded by pope Saint Callisto and called "titulus Callisti" above the "taberna meritoria" where a prodigious eruption of oil (maybe petroleum) from the soil is believed to be happened around 38 B.C., later interpreted as an announce of the coming of the Messiah.

Pope Giulio I commissioned the building of the church according to a basilica plan and then modified in the 8th and 9th centuries.

The present structure dates back to the re-building ordered by pope Innocenzo II between 1138 and 1148, using materials coming from the Baths of Caracalla.

Around 1702 pope Clemente XI fostered the re-building of the portico and the façade, designed by Carlo Fontana.

Virginio Vespignani also executed a "stylistic restoration" between 1866 and 1877.

In May 2018 the newly restored façade of the basilica was unveiled after one year of restoration works. The medieval mosaics, the Roman columns of the portico and the modern frescoes have been cleaned and now are clearly more visible and appreciable.

The invaluable interior of the basilica, mostly dating to the 12th century with the addition of painting masterpieces still in the following centuries, shines thanks to the sunrays light hitting the gold of the ceiling and the mosaics embellishing the presbytery and the frieze running along the trabeation. The structure of the colonnade with reused granite columns, featuring ancient capitals from the Terme di Caracalla, also gives the space a classic breath.

The apse is decorated with the celebrated mosaics completed after the death of pope Innocenzo II, depicted in the apse basin, on the left, holding the church model in his hands. In the center of the apse basin, Jesus Christ is represented while he crowns the Virgin Mary, accompanied by the saints Pietro, Cornelio, Giulio, Calepodio (right) and Callisto, Lorenzo and pope Innocenzo II (left).

At the height of the presbytery windows, the important mosaic cycle representing the Stories of the Virgin Mary was executed by the medieval painter Pietro Cavallini around 1291 and commissioned by Bertoldo Stefaneschi.



7) Chiesa di San Callisto

Address : Piazza di S. Calisto, 6, 00153 Roma RM

Duration : 10 minutes

Openings:

Overview:

The church of San Callisto was originally founded by pope Gregorio III in 741 on the same site of San Callisto's martyrdom and right inside it houses two angels sculptures attributed to Gian Lorenzo Bernini.



Description:

The church of San Callisto is characterized by a late Renaissance façade articulated in two orders, but it was founded by pope Gregorio III back in 741 on the same site of San Callisto's martyrdom.

Besides several restoration interventions, the church and its annexed homonym palace were re-built by architect Orazio Torriani around 1610.

Inside the church, the right chapel houses two angels sustaining the altarpiece representing Saint Mauro abate by Pier Leone Ghezzi. The angels sculptures have been attributed to Gian Lorenzo Bernini and date around 1657 ca.

8) Torre degli Anguillara

Address : Piazza Giuseppe Gioachino Belli, 47, 00153 Roma RM

Duration : 5 minutes

Openings:

Overview:

The building facing onto Piazza Giuseppe Gioachino Belli, overlooking the adjacent Palazzetto Anguillara, with which it formed a single building complex of medieval origins, was owned by the powerful Anguillara family until the middle of the XVI century. The original structures of the tower and the palace date from the XIII century but only the tower remains, with an outer wall of exposed brick. A large part of the current appearance of the complex dates from reconstructions in the XV century by Count Everso II Anguillara, aimed at converting the austere fortification into a small Renaissance palace. After the Anguillara, the complex, by then in ruins, passed into the hands of various owners, and was restored on several occasions, sometimes adapted for non-residential purposes (it variously housed an abattoir, a stables, a granary and an enamel factory) until the property was bought by the Municipality of Rome in 1887 and restored. The renovation of 1898-1902, supervised by Augusto Fallani, altered the original structure, especially of the tower, which was raised by a metre and a half and equipped with period battlements. From 1921, it was the headquarters of the Morale Casa di Dante organisation, as recorded in the inscription in the tower wall, alongside fragments of a female sculpture from the Roman era and a pediment.



Description:

At piazza Sonnino, the medieval and early Renaissance aspect of palazzetto Anguillara with its tower, Torre degli Anguillara, stands out along the modern and busy viale di Trastevere. The tower dominates the palace building on its north-western angle.

Both the tower and the palace date back to the 13th century and were re-built and maybe enlarged by conte Everso around 1455.

The restoration works carried out between 1893 and 1902, following the opening of viale Trastevere, caused the isolation of the complex, which was depleted of the original surrounding area. The Torre degli Anguillara has however kept its native aspect, whereas the palazzetto was heavily altered, especially on its northern and western façades.

Since 1914, the palazzetto is the seat of the Casa di Dante with its specialist library, promoting the studies around the figure of the poet Dante Alighieri.

9) Basilica di San Crisogono

Address : Piazza Sidney Sonnino, 44, 00153 Roma RM

Duration : 15 minutes

Openings:

Mon : 07:00 : 11:30 16:00 : 19:30

Tue : 07:00 : 11:30 16:00 : 19:30

Wed : 07:00 : 11:30 16:00 : 19:30

Thu : 07:00 : 11:30 16:00 : 19:30

Fri : 07:00 : 11:30 16:00 : 19:30

Sat : 07:00 : 11:30 16:00 : 11:30

Sun : 08:00 : 13:00 16:00 : 19:30

Overview:

According to tradition, Chrysogonus, a soldier originally from Aquileia, after professing his faith, was detained in Rome before being returned to his native city to die a martyr under emperor Diocletian between 304 and 305. The basilica dedicated to him was installed in the V century A.D within a hall (30 x 17 metres), perhaps already used as a place of worship, belonging to a building dating from between the III and the IV centuries A.D. In the V century, the room was extended and provided with an apse on the west side and a narthex on the opposite side. To the sides of the apse were two rooms: in the one to the left, the baptistry was housed; in the one to the right, the various services connected to religious functions were carried out. On the walls of the building, traces remain of the pictorial decorations of the VI and VIII century. Several times, the building was hit by flooding of the Tiber and in the XII century was submerged under around six metres of water. A building of a larger size was therefore constructed at a higher level, with three naves separated by 22 columns of the Roman era and an entrance portico. The Cosmati flooring (XIII century) which decorates the interior is remarkable. The church was completely restored in 1602 by the titular cardinal of the church, Scipione Caffarelli Borghese.

Description:

On the opposite side of piazza Sonnino, respect to the Anguillara complex, the church of San Crisogono, together with the annexed convent, was built several times at until the 19th century (1863-1866 and 1897-1925).

The original worship building, "titulus Chrysogoni" dating to the 5th century was demolished and buried by the cardinal Giovanni da Crema, who re-built it between 1123 and 1129. The cardinal Scipione Caffarelli Borghese then commissioned to Giovanni Battista Soria the restoration of the basilica between 1620 and 1626.

The present aspect of the basilica clearly carries the traces of the cardinal Borghese's restoration, starting from the simple tympanum façade, which is introduced by a Tuscanic portico with four granite columns coming from the medieval former colonnade. On the attic, the dragons and eagles, heraldic symbols of the powerful Borghese family, dominate the entrance to the church.

Giovanni Battista Soria's intervention inside the church didn't substantially altered the previous building proportions, but added the stucco decoration such as that one of the Ionic capitals with expanded volutes and the frieze with coat of arms and symbols relating to the Borghese family. He also designed the beautiful coffered wooden ceiling over the central nave and transept as well as the barrel vault of the side naves.

His monumental baldachin in a late-Mannerist style is sustained by four alabaster columns from the ancient ciborium. In the apse basin, the mosaic representing the Virgin Mary with Child between Saints Crisogono and Giacomo has been attributed to medieval painter Pietro Cavallini's circle and dated around 1290.

Beneath the church, a surprising underground basilica dating to the paleo-Christian and early Middle Ages periods is accessible from the sacristy.



10) Vicolo dell'Atleta



Address : Vicolo dell'Atleta, 00153 Roma RM

Duration : 5 minutes

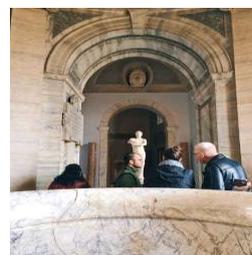
Openings:

Overview:

The picturesque and irregular vicolo dell'Atleta (literally in Italian: "Athlete's alley") is named after the spectacular finding of the Apoxyomenos statue now housed in the Vatican Museums happened around 1849, during an excavation of a Roman building dating to the imperial period.

Description:

Along the street, at the civic number 14 a medieval house has been maybe wrongly identified as the only ancient Jewish synagogue survived in Rome and it features an inscription in Hebrew characters upon the central column. This building, dating between the 13th and 14th centuries, is characterized by a loggia with arcade and a crowning with ogival little arches on stone shelves. Two Renaissance houses are still visible at the civic numbers 3 and 4.



11) Basilica di Santa Cecilia in Trastevere



Address : Piazza di Santa Cecilia, 22, 00153 Roma RM

Duration : 20 minutes

Openings:

Mon : 10:00 : 12:30 16:00 : 18:00

Tue : 10:00 : 12:30 16:00 : 18:00

Wed : 10:00 : 12:30 16:00 : 18:00

Thu : 10:00 : 12:30 16:00 : 18:00

Fri : 10:00 : 12:30 16:00 : 18:00

Sat : 10:00 : 12:30 16:00 : 18:00

Sun : 11:30 : 12:30 16:00 : 18:00

Overview:

According to tradition, the Saint may have belonged to the noble family of the Caecilii. Having converted to Christianity, she became a follower, with her husband Valerianus, of Pope Urbano I (222-230 A.D.). She was martyred by decapitation after a series of tortures culminating in her exposure, for three days, to the steam of the caldarium of the baths of her own house. She was buried in the Catacombs of San Callisto alongside the so-called "Crypt of the Popes". The body was later transferred to the house, earlier converted to a church by Pope Urbano I, at the wishes of Pope Pasquale I (817-824) who also ordered the reconstruction of the basilica. Between the XII and the XIII centuries, the portico, cloister and bell tower were added. In 1599, the body of Santa Cecilia was exhumed. The statue by Stefano Maderno is thought to stand in the exact position in which the body of the Saint was found. Between the XVI and XVIII century, the building underwent various additions including the monumental entrance of Ferdinando Fuga, which gives access to the atrium of the basilica. Beneath the church are the remains of an archeological complex attributed to a domus of the II century B.C., a multistory insula from the end of the II century A.D. and a number of thermal rooms. Recent excavations have also brought to light a baptismal font dating from the most ancient

phase of the church.

Description:

In piazza Santa Cecilia, a monumental entrance attributed to Ferdinando Fuga and dated between 1741-1742 leads to the heavenly courtyard facing the homonym basilica and its annexed convent, cultivated as a rose garden and decorated with an ancient marble cantharus according to the 1929 set-up. Before the 5th century AD, a place of worship was already located here, in the Roman house believed to belong to Saint Valeriano, husband of Cecilia, martyred when Marcus Aurelius was emperor.

Pope Pasquale I ordered the building of the present basilica, which was later enriched through the addition of the portico with ancient columns, the architrave embellished by the mosaic frieze and the characteristic Romanesque bell tower (mid-12th century), and the right wing destined to the convent and its cloister (between the end of the 12th and the beginning of the 13th centuries).

The present aspect of the basilica façade is however the result of reworks carried out on the occasion of the drastic restoration accomplished in 1724 by Domenico Paradisi and Luigi Barattoni for the cardinal Francesco Acquaviva d'Aragona, involving also the vault, the small choirs, the stucco decoration and the narthex of the basilica.

The façade of the convent over the piazza was accomplished between 1741 and 1742.

The wide and bright central nave still bears the rich and vivid 18th century nature, also highlighted by the elegant pilasters, which were ordered around 1823 by the cardinal Giacomo Doria to incorporate the original columns, due to static reasons.

The vaulted ceiling was frescoed around 1727 by Sebastiano Conca with the "Apotheosis of Santa Cecilia", commissioned by the cardinal Francesco Acquaviva.

In the presbytery space, the central ciborium is a masterpiece of Gothic architecture and sculpture by Arnolfo di Cambio, who signed it in 1293.

In the apse basin, an ancient mosaic dating around 820 A.D. represents the "Redeemer with Saints Paul, Cecilia, Paschal I, Peter, Valerian, and Agatha" against a spiritual deep blue sky.

Under the high altar the astonishing marble sculpture representing Saint Cecilia executed by Stefano Maderno around 1599-1600 lays in a sepulchre made of polychrome marbles and gilded bronze. The body is said to represent the exact saint's posture as she was found still incorrupt, seeming to be asleep, in the same site of the basilica, during the reconstruction works carried out around 1599.

If there's no crowd, you can try to kindly ask the sacristan to explore the "cappella del bagno" where, according to the tradition, the saint Cecilia stayed before the martyrdom. An archaeological complex is also accessible underground and the remains of medieval frescoes by Pietro Cavallini on the counter-façade accessible from the entrance space belonging to the convent of the Benedictine nuns really worth a visit.



12) Chiesa di San Cosimato

Address : Piazza di S. Cosimato, 67-76, 00153 Roma RM

Duration : 15 minutes

Openings:

Mon : 09:00 : 16:30

Tue : 09:00 : 16:30

Wed : 09:00 : 16:30

Thu : 09:00 : 16:30

Fri : 09:00 : 16:30

Overview:

In a part of Trastevere that in the medieval era would become the site of the church of San Cosimato, the emperor Augustus (23 B.C. - 14 A.D.) ordered the building of a Naumachia in 2 B.C. to celebrate with naval battles the dedication of the temple of Mars Ultor. More than 30 ships and 3,000 men were



involved in the inaugural spectacle. The location of this imposing structure, made up of a vast pool (536 x 357 metres) fed by an aqueduct built for the purpose (aqua Alsietina), was identified thanks to the discovery of the channel of the aqueduct and other architectural remains. In the X century, probably on the site of a previous place of worship, the church of San Cosimato was founded, connected to a Benedictine monastery named for the Santi Medici Cosma e Damiano (the current name derives from a corruption of the title). The complex, in the past owned by the nuns of Clarisse, the Order of Saint Clare, was restored in XIII and completely rebuilt by Pope Sisto IV (Francesco della Rovere, 1471-84). Used as a refuge in 1891, it is currently part of the Ospedale Regina Margherita. The monastic complex is divided between two cloisters (XIII and XV centuries) and an atrium furnished with a lavishly sculptured fifteenth century portal. The interior is made up of a simple rectangular hall. The original portal opened on Piazza San Cosimato preceded by a prothyrum from the XII century, consisting of a pair of reused ancient columns with composed capitals and surmounted by a turret.

Description:

The medieval prothyrum standing out in piazza San Cosimato belongs to the former Benedictine complex of San Cosimato, now converted into the hospital named "Ospedale nuovo Regina Margherita".

The original monastic seat arose in mid-10th century and its church, dedicated to saints Cosma, Damiano, Benedetto and Emerenziana, was consecrated in 1069.

The prothyrum, dating to the 12th century, is characterized by two ancient columns with composite capitals and gave access to an open-air atrium and to the worship building.

The religious complex was restored in 1246, when the first Romanesque cloister was probably built.

Between 1475 and 1485, pope Sisto IV renewed the monastic seat and rebuilt the church, the refectory and the chapter hall, adding a new cloister.

From the civic number 76, you can enter the first Romanesque cloister, characterized by a quadrangular plan with arcades on pilasters including a series of four little arches sustained by twin balausters.

The upper order of the cloister remains on the northern side of the complex dates back to pope Sisto IV intervention and keeps the arcades structure (even if later buffered) upon octagonal pillars. It is still decorated with medieval fragments of sculptures and architectural elements.

To the east, the first Romanesque cloister is contiguous to the second cloister, entirely built by order of pope Sisto IV. This second cloister features a double order of octagonal pilasters.

The opposite northern side of the first cloister gives access to the open-air atrium, where a Roman basin made of granite transformed into a fountain in 1731 is located, and to the church of San Cosimato.

The Renaissance gabled façade of the church features a raised tympanum with small arches crowning in Gothic style and a richly sculpted wooden portal still dating to the 15th century.

The decoration of the simple rectangular interior was modified around 1871 on the occasion of the 19th century intervention. The church still conserves on the high altar the medieval icon of the Virgin Mary with Child dating back to the 13th century and coming from the early basilica di San Pietro in Vaticano.

On the left side of the back wall, the fresco representing the Virgin Mary on the throne between Saints Francesco and Chiara was painted by Antonio del Massaro or Antonio da Viterbo, called "il Pastura" (Viterbo, 1450 ca. –before 1516).

On the left side of the church, the altar of Saint Severa chapel is constituted with elements from the monuments to the cardinal Lorenzo Cybo, executed by the circle of the Renaissance sculptor Giovanni Cristoforo Romano and formerly located at basilica di Santa Maria del Popolo.

A room annexed to the sacristy houses seven paintings on canvas by Giuseppe Ghezzi, Lazzaro Baldi and Jacques Courtois called "il Borgognone", coming from the oratory of the church of Sant'Angelo in Pescheria at the Porticus of Octavia.

13) Chiesa e Santuario di San Francesco a Ripa Grande



Address : Piazza di S. Francesco d'Assisi, 88, 00153 Roma RM

Duration : 15 minutes

Openings:

Mon : 07:00 : 13:00 15:00 : 19:30

Tue : 07:00 : 13:00 15:00 : 19:30

Wed : 07:00 : 13:00 15:00 : 19:30

Thu : 07:00 : 13:00 15:00 : 19:30

Fri : 07:00 : 13:00 15:00 : 19:30

Sat : 07:00 : 13:00 15:00 : 19:30

Sun : 07:00 : 13:00 15:00 : 19:30

Overview:

The church stands at the end of the road commissioned by Paolo V (Camillo Borghese, 1605-1621) to extend Via della Lungara from Santa Maria in Trastevere to the Porto di Ripa Grande. Annexed to the Pilgrim's Hospice of the monastery erected near Porto di Ripa Grande, the existing church of San Biagio de Curte (known since the XI century) was dedicated to San Francesco, who was a guest at the Hospice in 1219. The present structure dates from

the seventeenth century restoration by Onorio Longhi (1603), commissioned by Paolo V and completed with the new facade of Mattia De Rossi between 1681-1701. Inside, in the transept, the Paluzzi-Albertoni chapel houses one of the masterpieces of Baroque sculpture by Gian Lorenzo Bernini, the Ecstasy of the Blessed Ludovica Albertoni (1671-1675), one of the artist's last works which recalls the statue of Santa Teresa preserved in the church of Santa Maria della Vittoria. Dating from the beginning of the XVII century, the chapel of the Pallavicini Rospigliosi family, decorated with multicoloured marble to a design by Nicola Michetti with sculptures by Giuseppe Mazzuoli, was completed in 1726 by Ludovico Rusconi. The wooden model of the original design is preserved at the Museum of Rome.

Description:

The chiesa di San Francesco is dedicated to Saint Francis of Assisi because the complex of the church and its annexed convent was erected on the same site of the former chiesa di San Biagio and the Benedictine monastery dating to the 10th century AD, which hosted Saint Francis of Assisi according to the tradition. The monastery was passed to the Friars Minor around 1229 and then it was enlarged between the end of the Sixteenth and the Eighteenth centuries. Most of the building was converted into barracks between 1873 and 1943.

The façade of the church was designed by the architect Mattia De Rossi between 1681 and 1685, who also demolished and re-built the interior naves and erected the three chapels on the right side, in a symmetrical position respect to those one on the left side, previously built around 1530-1540.

The façade is articulated in two orders: the inferior one is characterized by a horizontal direction, whereas in the upper one the curvilinear elements of the pediment and the volutes corresponding to the aisles contributes to the fragmented aspect of the tympanum ("timpano spezzato").

The interior of the church, dominated by a Franciscan sobriety, enshrines the masterpiece of Gian Lorenzo Bernini: the Blessed Ludovica Albertoni, commissioned by the cardinal Paluzzo Paluzzi degli Albertoni Altieri and executed by the great artist between 1671 and 1674 in the Altieri chapel. The architecture of the chapel wasn't modified by Bernini except for the moving back of the bottom wall and the brilliant choice of a natural light source with a theatrical effect over the sculpture. The contrast between the pallor of the marble and the colors of the altarpiece located behind the Blessed Ludovica, representing St. Anna and the Virgin Mary and painted by Baciccia, contributes to the pictorial values of Bernini's artwork. Here the great Baroque artist reached a masterful use of light and different materials, with chiaroscuro dramatic force and color vibrancy, as well as architectural shapes and lines, which contribute to the unicity of this polymateric masterpiece.



14) Porta Portese

Address : Piazza di Porta Portese, 00153 Roma RM

Duration : 10 minutes

Openings:

Overview:

The Porta Portese designed by the architect Marcantonio De Rossi in the 17th century was fostered by pope Urbano VIII Barberini to substitute the ancient "porta Portuensis" but the inauguration happened with pope Innocenzo X whose coat of arms is presently displayed over the portal.

Description:

Porta Portese in piazzale Portuense constituted the access to the city of Rome from pope Urbano VIII walls. The portal substituted the former "porta Portuensis" belonging to the Aurelian Walls, which was located further south.

The present portal is made of travertine stone and it is characterized by a single fornix framed with Tuscanic columns and niches. It was executed by the architect Marcantonio De Rossi around 1644 under pope Urbano VIII Barberini commission, but the inauguration occurred with pope Innocenzo X Pamphilj whose coat of arms is presently displayed over the portal front.



Enjoy the flea market in the nearby occurring every Sunday from 6.00 am to 2.00 pm.