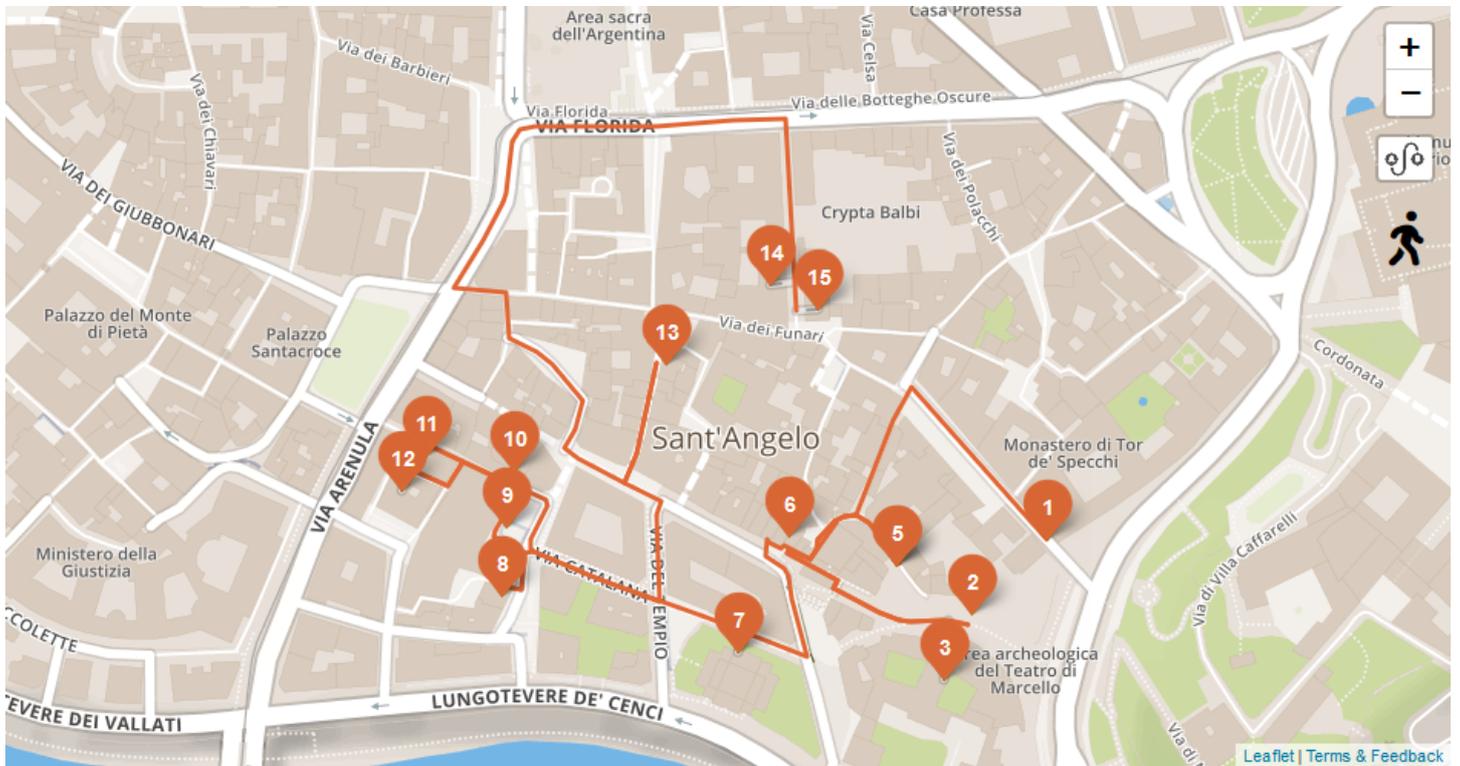




# Jewish Ghetto art and history

*Walking into the Jewish Ghetto art and history self-guided itinerary*



## Itinerary description:

Venture into the most ancient ghetto in the world after that one in Venice. This self-guided walking tour of the Jewish Ghetto in Rome will allow you to unveil the original story and cultural heritage of this neighborhood which was surrounded by walls and isolated back in 1555 and was kept unaltered until the 19th century.

The valuable artistic opulence and historic worth of the Jewish Ghetto is extraordinarily concentrated in a small area, which features the majestic building of the Tempio Maggiore, the latest Jewish synagogue in Rome, next to the evocative ancient Roman Porticus Octavie, as well as the astonishing courtyard of Palazzo Mattei di Giove, which housed one of the most precious private collections of antiquities in Rome, next to the elegant Fontana delle Tartarughe, embellished by the presence of the copies of the legendary turtles probably designed by Bernini.

You'll admire the Theatre of Marcellus, the earliest and most capacious theater in Ancient Rome after the Theatre of Pompey and you'll find the Palazzo Cenci, residence of the Cenci family, to which the noblewoman Beatrice Cenci destined to a tragic death belonged. You'll retrace the medieval history of Rome, still entrapped in the Torre dei Grassi and you'll examine countless artworks enshrined in the churches, such as the chiesa di Santa Caterina de' Funari, housing masterpieces by illustrious painters like Annibale Carracci, Girolamo Muziano, Federico Zuccari, Scipione Pulzone and Marcello Venusti.

Discover the most hidden soul of Rome, left unexplored for far too long.

## Tour settings:

Travel time : 3 h

Total waypoints : 15

Tickets cost : 11 €

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

For family : yes

Ladders : yes

Low visibility: no

Steep: yes

## Highlights:

Fontana delle Tartarughe,Tempio Maggiore,Portico d'Ottavia,Teatro di Marcello,Tempio di Apollo Sosiano,Chiesa di Santa Caterina de'Funari

## Hidden gems:

Fontana del Pianto,Chiesa di San Tommaso ai Cenci,Palazzo Mattei di Giove,Palazzetto Cenci

## 1) Chiesa di Santa Rita da Cascia in Campitelli

Address : Via Montanara, 00186 Roma RM

Duration : 10 minutes

Openings:

Mon : 15:00 : 19:00

Tue : 15:00 : 19:00

Wed : 15:00 : 19:00

Thu : 15:00 : 19:00

Fri : 15:00 : 19:00

Sat : 09:30 : 13:30

### Overview:

The church, today deconsecrated and used as a hall for concerts and conferences, originally stood at the foot of the Capitoline hill to the right of the stairway of the Aracoeli, in an area occupied in antiquity by an insula from the imperial era. The building was dismantled in order to open Via del Mare in 1928 and rebuilt in its current location in Via Montanara at the corner with Via del Teatro di Marcello in 1940. It was built as a church dedicated to San Biagio in the XI century (of the church, part of the Romanesque bell tower in brick remains at the foot of the Capitoline), restored by Carlo Fontana (1665) and under the papacy of Alessandro VII (Fabio Chigi, 1655-67) it was donated to the community by the Casciani family, who lived in Rome. The church retained the dedication to San Biagio until the year 1900 when, with the canonisation of Santa Rita, the dedication to the Umbrian Saint was added. The building, in the form of a Greek cross, developed in a particular way on the exterior: the lower order features a quadrilateral plan adorned vertically with pilasters that frame three arches with a skewed perspective; the upper order, which encloses the central cupola, has a profile with concave chamfered corners.

### Description:

In via Montanara the church of Santa Rita da Cascia in Campitelli, now deconsecrated, has been re-built here around 1940. It was originally designed by Carlo Fontana around 1665 and it was located on the left side of the basilica di Santa Maria in Aracoeli stairway.

The peculiarity of this church architecture lies in the quadrilateral plan of the lower order, with pilaster strips including three blind arcades in perspectival splay, surmounted by the upper composite order, which features concave rounded sections in the corners and windows in additional perspectival splays.



## 2) Tempio di Apollo Sosiano



Address : Via del Teatro di Marcello, 42, 00186 Roma RM

Duration : 10 minutes

Openings:

Mon : 09:00 : 18:00

Tue : 09:00 : 18:00

Wed : 09:00 : 18:00

Thu : 09:00 : 18:00

Fri : 09:00 : 18:00

Sat : 09:00 : 18:00

Sun : 09:00 : 18:00

### Overview:

A site of worship dedicated to Apollo existed in the Prata Flaminia (later the Circus Flaminius) from the VI century B.C. On that site, in 433 B.C., following a plague, a temple was dedicated to Apollo medicus. The building was subject in the Republican era to various restoration works which left the design unaltered with four columns at the front. A complete restoration was undertaken in 30 B.C. by the Consul Gaius Sosius on behalf of Augustus (23 B.C. - 14 A.D.). Other limited restorations were carried out in IV and the V centuries A.D. In later eras, the temple fell into ruins and the area was gradually occupied by medieval buildings. In the nineteenth thirties, the works to isolate the theatre of Marcellus brought the monument to light and led to the partial reconstruction of the elevation. The temple of the Augustan era presented a pronaos with six columns on the front and two on the side, and a cella decorated with seven semi-columns. Inside, the walls of the cella were decorated by a double order of columns and small shrines with shafts of coloured marble placed between the columns of the lower order. Access to the pronaos was by means of two side steps. The pediment, currently in the offices of the Centrale Montemartini of the Capitoline Museums, was decorated with sculptures stripped from a classical Greek temple (450-425 B.C.) depicting the battle of the Greeks against the Amazonians.

### Description:

In the archaeological area next to the Theatre of Marcellus, the three marble columns with Corinthian capitals supporting a fragment of trabeation decorated with a frieze representing ox skulls and olive branches were part of the Ancient Roman Temple of Apollo Sosianus, dedicated in 431 BC, restored in 179 BC and finally re-built in 34 BC by the Roman general and politician Gaius Sosius, hence the name of the temple "Sosianus".

## 3) Teatro di Marcello



Address : Via del Teatro di Marcello, 00186 Roma RM

Duration : 20 minutes

Openings:

Mon : 09:00 : 18:00

Tue : 09:00 : 18:00

Wed : 09:00 : 18:00

Thu : 09:00 : 18:00

Fri : 09:00 : 18:00

Sat : 09:00 : 18:00

Sun : 09:00 : 18:00

### Overview:

The Theatre of Marcellus, named after the prematurely deceased nephew and heir of the emperor, was erected by Augustus in 13 or 11 B.C. near the temple of Apollo Sosianus, on a site already used for the staging of scenic representations (by means of mobile structures in wood) in honour of the divinity. Of smaller size than the Theatre of Pompey (around 130 metres in diameter), the spectator area had a curvilinear façade, with two orders of arches decorated by semi-columns and huge theatrical masks on the arch keystones. The third order was probably formed by a continuous wall decorated with pilasters. The stage, obliterated by later constructions (but which is known through the fragments of the marble plan of the city once displayed in the Forum of Peace) was rectilinear and flanked by the two edges of the great apsidal halls, perhaps the sacella of Diana and the Pietà whose

temples were destroyed in order to build the theatre. Still in use in the V century A.D., in the Middle Ages the building was gradually occupied by construction until it was converted into a fortress in the XIII century and a noble palace by the Savelli in the sixteenth century (by Baldassare Peruzzi, 1523-27) As the documents of the time show, by the X century, the neighbouring area had become a lively district centred on the meat market. In the years 1926-1932, the lower part of the palace, corresponding to the Roman structures, was acquired by the Municipality of Rome and restored, completely removing all evidence of the medieval and Renaissance districts.

### Description:

Hosting about 15.000 spectators, the public Theatre of Marcellus (Theatrum Marcelli) was the earliest and most capacious theatre in Ancient Rome after the Theatre of Pompey. Its building was begun by Julius Caesar and dedicated by Augustus around 13 or 11 BC to the memory of his nephew and son-in-law Marcus, son of his sister Octavia.

The cavea has a diameter of about 130 meters and its façade in Travertine was articulated in three order, although only the first two doric and ionic arcades have survived, whereas the third order probably a closed attic with Corinthian parastas was substituted by the façade of Palazzo Orsini.

The arcades, originally 41 each order and now 12 left, had keystones decorated with marble theater masks.

Under the cavea large radial septa were built in opus quadratum and made of tuff and, in the inner part, in opus caementitium with a facing in opus reticulatum. Flights and ambulatory passageways allowed a fast circulation of the spectators.

The theatre was abandoned in the 5th century AD and half part of its first order was buried. It was firstly used a material quarry, then as a fortress and later as a patrician palace, constituting one of the most peculiar example of continuous change of habitation forms.

The theatre was excavated and restored by Alberto Calza Bini between 1926 and 1932, when the arches on the norther side were re-built reproducing the ancient architecture and made of tuff, in order to function as buttress, even if the surrounding urban buildings were damaged.



## 4) Portico d'Ottavia

Address : Via del Portico d'Ottavia, 29, 00186 Roma RM

Duration : 10 minutes

Openings:

### Overview:

The ancient colonnaded quadrangle of Metellus, begun in 146 B.C. and probably completed in 131 B.C., included the temples of Juno Regina and Jupiter Stator. It was embellished with numerous bronze statues including the female statue of Cornelia, mother of the Gracchi, the base of which was found near the side of the door of Sant'Angelo in Pescheria. Between 33 and 23 B.C., the portico was dedicated by Gaius Ottavius (later Augustus) to his sister Octavia. On this occasion, the libraries, the Curia Octaviae to the north and the monumental access in the direction of the Circus Flaminius were added. The remains still visible were part of the restoration by Septimius Severus in 203, as recorded by the inscription on the architrave of the propylaeum. The arch to the right, at the church of Sant'Angelo, is a medieval addition. The portico of Ottavia is depicted in one of the fragments of marble from the Severian model of Rome (forma Urbis). From the Middle Ages (until around 1880) the portico of Ottavia housed the most important fish market in the city. The economic value of the fish trade was favoured by the precepts of the Catholic church, which forbade the consumption of meat for around a third of the year. The picturesque market inspired many artists, above all in the nineteenth century, such as Ettore Roesler Franz. The fish were displayed on large slabs of marble, rented from the Canons of the Chapter of Sant'Angelo by leading figures who hired them out to the vendors. A plaque records the privilege of the Conservators (Municipal authorities) of receiving the head (considered the best part) of any fish that exceeded the length of the slab (around a metre).



## Description:

One of the most evocative sites in Rome, the Portico d'Ottavia (Porticus Octaviae) originally was a monumental passageway raised in 146 BC by Quintus Caecilius Metellus and called Porticus Metelli. It was constituted by a double portico, 119 meters large and 132 meters long, which included the preexisting temple of Juno Regina and the still erected temple of Jupiter Stator, which was the first temple to entirely be built in marble in Rome.

It was then re-built between 27 and 23 BC by Augustus, who dedicated it to his sister Octavia Minor and enlarged it towards north to incorporate also Octavia's curia and library.

Around 203 AD, Septimius Severus and then Caracalla re-built the porticus, which housed several artworks in its interiors and became seat of the city fish market since the Middle Ages until the dismantling of the ghetto at the end of the 19th century.

Nowadays only a part of the porticus façade is still visible, characterized by a monumental propylaeum with Corinthian columns dating back to Severus' period.

## 5) Chiesa di Sant'Angelo in Pescheria

Address : Via della Tribuna di Campitelli, 6, 00186 Roma RM

Duration : 15 minutes

Openings:

Mon : 15:00 : 19:00

Tue : 15:00 : 19:00

### Overview:

Located at a focal point of connections with Trastevere, the little church was built in 755 as the deaconry of San Paola amid the ruins of the ancient portico of Ottavia. Starting from the XII century, when it was restructured in Romanesque form, it took the name of Sant'Angelo in foro piscium from the fish market, one of the main fish markets in Rome held near the portico of Ottavia from the Middle Ages to the nineteenth century. The canons of the chapter of Sant'Angelo rented out the pietre del pesce, slabs of marble on which the catch was displayed. From here, in 1347, Cola di Rienzo set off to occupy the Capitoline. Lying at the southern edge of the Ghetto, sermons were held every Saturday in support of the forced conversion of the Jews. The church, with three naves, had a brick façade installed in the rear colonnade of the portico of Ottavia. Inside, a fresco is preserved from 1450 of the Madonna that is attributed to Benozzo Gozzoli, originally located on the outer wall of the rectory. The church was restored several times, starting from the XVI century until the XIX century, when the current bell tower was built to replace the thirteen century edifice that had collapsed in the XVII century. Annexed to the church is the Chapel of Sant' Andrea erected by the Compagnia del Pescivendoli in 1571, with a painting by Giorgio Vasari (1511-1574).



## Description:

The monumental propylaeum with Corinthian columns belonging to the Porticus Octaviae constitutes the entrance to the chiesa di Sant'Angelo in Pescheria, which gives the name to homonym "rione Sant'Angelo".

This place of worship was founded back in 755 AD and it was called "in foro piscium" since the 12th century.

The church was restored several times until at least the year 1870, when its apse was moved back. Its façade is included in the back colonnade of the Roman building.

The 15th century interior is characterized by three naves and features a fresco representing the Virgin Mary with Child and angels, dated 1450, coming from the outer wall of the rectory and attributed to Benozzo Gozzoli, now in the second chapel on the left, and a Crucified Christ dating to the 16th century and housed in the first chapel on the same side.

On the right side of the ancient propylaeum, next to the church, the Oratorio di Sant'Andrea dei Pescivendoli, oratory dating to 1689, shows a beautiful façade with a stucco decoration.





## 6) Torre dei Grassi

Address : Via del Portico d'Ottavia, 25, 00186 Roma RM

Duration : 5 minutes

Openings:

### Overview:

On the modern day Via del Portico d'Ottavia and Via di Sant'Angelo in Pescheria, the three sides of a tower can be seen adjacent to the entry propylaeum of the ancient Porticus Octaviae, part of the side of which was incorporated. In this area, the Forum Piscium stood in the medieval era, one of the main fish markets in the city from the VI-VII century. The building was known as the Turris Fornicata or Soricara or Torre dei Grassi after the name of the family belonging to the city's mercantile nobility in the late medieval era, who acquired it from the Orsini in 1369. The construction of the tower dates from the XIII century and the middle of the XIV century. The building has a curtain wall in exposed brick and an irregular squared plan, the northwestern side facing the nearby church of Sant'Angelo in Pescheria, clearly oriented in that way because of an ancient roadway. On the Via del Portico d'Ottavia is the grand entrance decorated with abutments and reused marble architraves surmounted by a brick lintel. On this façade, there must have been three windows, of which some marble elements of the cornices remain. An equal number of windows was also present on the side of Via di Sant'Angelo in Pescheria, surmounted however by an architrave constructed with reused architectural elements and a brick lintel above; at a later time, perhaps the XV century, the stairway with a gooseneck canopy giving access to the main floor was constructed. The third side incorporates part of the propylaeum of the Porticus, with a window.



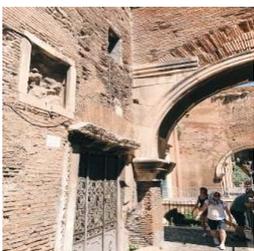
### Description:

Torre dei Grassi is a medieval tower, now visible leaning against the Porticus Octaviae, at the civic number 25 of via del Portico d'Ottavia.

This tower underwent several building phases, maybe since the 12th century.

It is also called "Torre Fornicata" because of its shape, while the name "Grassi" derives from the family who was its owner after having acquired it from the Orsini family around 1369.

The tower was then acquired by the Ospedale di Santa Maria della Consolazione around 1481.



## 7) Tempio Maggiore di Roma



Address : Lungotevere de' Cenci, 00186 Roma RM

Duration : 30 minutes

Openings:

Mon : 10:00 : 17:00

Tue : 10:00 : 17:00

Wed : 10:00 : 17:00

Thu : 10:00 : 17:00

Fri : 09:00 : 14:00

Sat : 10:00 : 17:00

### Overview:

At the time of the redevelopment of the Jewish Ghetto at the Portico d'Ottavia, at the end of the Nineteenth century, one of the four blocks within the new perimeter was assigned to the Tempio Maggiore. A competition won by architects Vincenzo Costa and Osvaldo Armani was announced for the construction of the place of worship. The first stone was laid in 1901 and the synagogue was inaugurated in 1904. The imposing building, visible from every panoramic point of the city, is in an eclectic style with references to Greek and Assyrian architecture. The main façade, along via del Tempio, introduced by a portico with four columns, is decorated with Jewish symbols. The Greek cross plan (oriented to the east so that the worshippers, in accordance with the principle contained in the Bible, could recite the prayers oriented towards Jerusalem) is surmounted by a pavilion-shape dome on a square tambour, made of translucent aluminum. The interior is richly decorated with geometric and floral motifs that are repeated on the walls, on the dome and on the glass windows. The two seats of the bimà (the place from which the Torah is read aloud) and the two cabinets destined to the Bible scrolls, precious works in colored marble dating back to the 16th and 17th centuries, come from the old Five Scole synagogue. The women's gallery, the area dedicated to women only, is located on three sides of the temple, in a raised position. The museum of the Jewish community of Rome and a small synagogue, the Spanish Temple, are located on the lower floor. The authors are Costa Vincenzo and Armani Osvaldo (1899-1904).

### Description:

The so-called "Tempio Maggiore" or "Sinagoga nuova", the latest Jewish synagogue in Rome, was designed by the architects Osvaldo Armani and Vincenzo Costa (1899-1904), who won the competition announced for the construction of the place of worship. The first stone of the synagogue was laid in 1901 and the synagogue was inaugurated in 1904.

Characterized by a Greek-cross plan with a pavilion-shape dome on a square tambour, this place of worship intended to distinguish from any catholic site especially through the use of decorative motifs reminiscent of the Assyrian-Babylonian architecture, in order to recall the territorial roots of the Jewish people.

The façade overlooking the parallel via del Tempio, featuring a portico equipped with three entrances, shows Hebraic symbols such as the seven-branched candelabrum, the Tables of the Law, the Star of David, palm-tree branch).

In the synagogue interior, three orthogonal wings, surmounted by women's galleries are divided through columns, whereas the fourth wing, which constitute the apse, house the raised niche of the Holy Ark.

Inside the synagogue building, the Museo dell'Arte Ebraica displays archaeological findings, prints, worship objects, liturgical silverware and sacred hangings.



## 8) Chiesa di San Tommaso ai Cenci

Address : Piazza delle Cinque Scole, 3, 00186 Roma RM

Duration : 15 minutes

Openings:

Mon : 10:00 : 12:00

Tue : 10:00 : 12:00

Wed : 10:00 : 12:00

Thu : 17:00 : 19:00

Fri : 10:00 : 12:00

Sat : 10:00 : 12:00

### Overview:

San Tommaso ai Cenci is a church incorporated within the Palazzo dei Cenci, part of the imposing group of buildings that made up the residence of the Cenci, a family known in Rome as far back as the Middle Ages: the building was the church's land registry court. In the medieval era, the area was characterised by the presence of mills on the left bank of the Tiber, from which it took the name of San Tommaso in capite molarum (above the millstones). The building was also known by the name of San Tommaso Fraternitatis, because for some time it was the site of the Romana Fraternitas, one of the most important and ancient Roman fellowships. The current name is derived from the palace of the Cenci, to which it was annexed from the XV century. The church, documented from the XII century, was completely renovated between 1559 and 1575 at the wishes of Cristoforo and Francesco Cenci: the two-part façade bears, between the two portals, the Roman funerary inscription of Marcus Cincius Theophilus, placed here by the Cenci because of the similarity with the name of the family. The interior has a rectangular layout with a single nave and houses the chapel of the Cenci; the high altar has a tondo of turquoise murra, a rare variety of marble, the only example in Rome. In the first chapel on the left is the Storie della Vergine by Sermoneta (1585).

### Description:

The noble chapel-church of San Tommaso ai Cenci was already mentioned in the 12th century, located on the previous site of the ancient Roman temples dedicated to the Dioscuri and called "in capite molarum" due to the close presence of the mills on the Tiber river.

Cristoforo Cenci begun a complete renovation of this chapel around 1559, which was fulfilled by his son Francesco around 1575.

The unusual bipartition of the façade conserves the Roman funerary altar of Marcus Cincius Theophilus between the two portals, located here by the Cenci family because of the similarity of their family name to that one of Cincius.

The interior of the church, the high altar table is supported by two marble trapezophoros representing two winged lions dating to the 1st century. The altarpiece depicting the Incredulity of Saint Thomas was painted by Giuseppe Vermiglio around 1612, whereas the Stories of the Virgin Mary in the first chapel on the left were painted by Girolamo Siciolante da Sermoneta around 1585.



## 9) Fontana del Pianto



Address : Piazza delle Cinque Scole, 00186 Roma RM

Duration : 5 minutes

Openings:

### Overview:

The Fontana del Pianto was designed by Giacomo Della Porta in 1591 and executed by Pietro Gucci in the two following years. The fountain was previously located in piazza Giudia or Giudea, then definitely re-composed in 1930 in piazza delle Cinque Scole.

### Description:

In piazza delle Cinque Scole (formerly, via del Progresso), named after the "Scole" gathered in the Jewish temple at that time overlooking the piazza, the fountain then called "Fontana del Pianto" was definitely re-composed according to its original aspect in 1930.

The marble fountain was previously located in fact in piazza Giudia or Giudea, which functioned as main entrance to the Jewish Ghetto and vanished on the occasion of the demolition works occurred in this area at the beginning of the 20th century.

This complex artwork was designed by Giacomo Della Porta in 1591 and executed by Pietro Gucci in the two following years, using the white marble coming from the ancient Temple of Serapis on the Quirinal Hill.

The project intended to create a fountain which could provide water to the Jewish Ghetto, instituted in 1555, fed by the extended Aqua Virgo ancient aqueduct.

The fountain is characterized by a lower mixilinear basin decorated with the noble emblems of the magistrates in office for the year 1593 and surmounted by an upper circular one, embellished with heads of Gorgons whose mouths let the water fall down.



## 10) Chiesa di Santa Maria del Pianto (formerly San Salvatore dei Caccabariis)



Address : Via di S. Maria del Pianto, 7, 00186 Roma RM

Duration : 10 minutes

Openings:

Mon : 12:00 : 13:00

Tue : 12:00 : 13:00

Wed : 12:00 : 13:00

Thu : 12:00 : 13:00

Fri : 12:00 : 13:00

Sat : 12:00 : 13:00

Sun : 10:00 : 12:00

### Overview:

The church of Santa Maria del Pianto, which was erected at the corner between Santa Maria dei Calderari and Piazza delle Cinque Scole, was recorded in the sources from the XII century onwards with the name of San Salvatore de Caccabariis (that is, pot workers, or copper bowl makers, who were based

nearby at Monte Cenci). The current name relates to a miraculous event in 1546 when, after a violent brawl, the fresco of the Madonna on a wall of the Portico d'Ottavia was seen to cry. The miraculous image was removed and taken to the church which still bears the name today. The current building was constructed at the beginning of the XVII century when the existing church that had housed the miraculous image was demolished. The works on the new building began in 1612 but the new church remained incomplete, without a façade. Access to the interior of the church, in the form of a Greek cross with a hemispheric cupola encompassed on the outside by octagonal cladding, is gained through a simple nineteenth century marble portal which faces onto Via di Santa Maria dei Calderari, actually opening onto the ground floor of one of the buildings adjacent to the church. Seriously damaged by lightning at the end of the nineteenth century, the church remained closed for worship for several decades due to restoration works.

### Description:

The church of Santa Maria del Pianto was re-built around 1612 following Nicolò Sebregondi's design but left unfinished, because the front wing and the façade are missing.

The name of the church recalls a miraculous event happened in 1546, when a figure of the Virgin Mary, frescoed on a wall belonging to the Porticus Octaviae where a crime was accomplished, was seen crying.

The interior of the church, accessible from via di Santa Maria del Pianto, is characterized by a Greek-cross plan and majestic proportions, featuring large pilaster strips and a dome over pendentives embellished with stucco decorations.

Near the entrance, a fragment of a Gothic ciborium with four trefoil arches is visible, while the venerated fresco of the Madonna del Pianto, dating to the 15th century, is located on the high altar.



## 11) Palazzo Cenci Bolognetti

Address : Piazza delle Cinque Scole, 23, 00186 Roma

Duration : 10 minutes

Openings:

### Overview:

On the western side of piazza delle Cinque Scole, the 16th century Palazzo Cenci Bolognetti is accessible from the 19th century portal located at the civic number 23.



### Description:

This palace is part of the grandiose complex of buildings raised as residence of the Cenci, renowned family since the Middle Ages, partially on the ground elevation called Monte dei Cenci, which originated from Roman ruins.

The main façade of the palace overlooks on via Monte de' Cenci and reveals the incorporation of previous buildings, whereas the back façade at piazza Cenci shows a wing (civic number 7A) decorated with a Doric frieze featuring half-moon figures, symbols of the Cenci family, alternated with the crowned eagles, symbols of the Lante family, which married into each other around 1575.





## 12) Palazzetto Cenci

Address : Piazza Cenci, 56, 00186 Roma RM

Duration : 10 minutes

Openings:

### Overview:

Overlooking on piazza Cenci, the so-called "Palazzetto Cenci", at the civic number 56, belongs to the Cenci complex of buildings and it dates to the Late-Sixteenth century.

### Description:

The palace is characterized by a façade stucco decoration shaped into flat ashlar and a cornice featuring half-moon symbols. The palace was erected by Martino Longhi il Vecchio between 1579 and 1584 and it is accompanied on its right side by the "Arco dei Cenci", dating back to the Middle Ages.



## 13) Fontana delle Tartarughe



Address : Piazza Mattei, 00186 Roma RM

Duration : 15 minutes

Openings:

### Overview:

The elegant Fontana delle Tartarughe, originally intended for Piazza Giudia, was constructed by Giacomo della Porta between 1581 and 1584 for Muzio Mattei in the square where his family palace was located. The usual layout, already employed several times by the architect, was in this case abandoned in favour of a composition in which the sculptural element was to the fore, probably in part due to the influence of the sculptor Taddeo Landini who collaborated on the project. The model may have been the Fontana del Nettuno in Florence, the work of Bartolomeo Ammannati (1563-75) with its bronze statues of satyrs and fauns. The central element in Della Porta's fountain thus became the four bronze ephebes with their arms raised and dolphins above the accomplished basins in Portasante marble in the form of conch shells. On the border of the basin, a restoration ordered by Pope Alessandro VII (Fabio Chigi, 1655-1667) in 1658 extended the quadrangular exterior pool and added the four bronze turtles in the act of jumping into the basin, perhaps the work of Gian Lorenzo Bernini.

### Description:

At the center of piazza Mattei, the Fontana delle Tartarughe (literally, "Turtles' fountain") stands out thanks to its extremely articulated and elegant composition.

The fountain was executed between 1581 and 1584 according to Giacomo Della Porta's project, whereas the bronze sculptures were authored by Taddeo Landini.

In the lower basin, a mixtilinear basement decorated with title blocks sustains four large marble shells, on which the same amount of ephebes leaning against dolphins encourage the turtles to drink in the upper basin, embellished with puttos heads. The turtles, at present substituted with copies, were later added on the occasion of a restoration in 1658, maybe executed by Gian Lorenzo Bernini.



## 14) Palazzo Mattei di Giove

Address : Via Michelangelo Caetani, 32, 00186 Roma RM

Duration : 15 minutes

Openings:

### Overview:

The edifice was constructed by Carlo Maderno beginning in 1598 on the commission of Asdrubale Mattei, Marquis of Monte Giove, who had married Costanza Gonzaga. By the second half of the fifteenth century, the interests of the Mattei family were already concentrated in the Rione Sant'Angelo in the large block erected near the remains of the ancient theatre of Balbus, where the fortified settlement known as Castrum Aureum was developed in the IX century. The palace was the last of the family's buildings which formed the Isola dei Mattei. From the exterior, it appeared to be a closed building in late sixteenth century style following the traditional model with the main courtyard separated from the rear garden by an arcade on a single level. In fact, the architecture reveals a more open layout which suggests the complex should be appreciated in its individual parts, with the contrast between the simplicity



of the exterior and the richness of the internal courtyard with reliefs and antique statues. The palace has two entrances and two prospects, the main one facing towards the church of Santa Caterina dei Funari, the other on Via dei Funari. The two entrances offer similar perspectives but with different development. One opens on the thoroughfare of Via dei Funari framed by the arcade of the inner courtyard that displayed one of the major collections of ancient marble in the city. The other opens on Via Caetani from the landing of the large, four ramp stairway, flanked by statues. The three-story palace is surmounted by a cornice decorated with the heraldic motifs of the Mattei and the Gonzaga and by a rooftop loggia with arcade, set on the medieval tower known as *Turris Salitulæ*. Inside are paintings with themes from the Old Testament by the major painters active in Rome in the early seventeenth century: Francesco Albani, Lanfranco, Pomarancio and Pietro da Cortona.

### Description:

The solemn façade of Palazzo Mattei di Giove, made of bricks and travertine, is completed by a cornice decorated with heraldic motifs. This palace was the last building accomplished for the Mattei family.

It was begun by Carlo Maderno around 1598 and commissioned by Asdrubale Mattei. It was enlarged around 1613 to overlook on via Caetani and completed in 1618.

The palace then passed to the Antici Mattei family and now it is seat of the Discoteca di Stato and of the Biblioteca di Storia moderna e contemporanea, which houses around 300.000 volumes and periodicals.

Accessible from the civic number 32 of via Caetani, an entrance hall embellished with low reliefs over the doors leads to the portico open to an astonishing courtyard, decorated with statues, busts and classical low reliefs featuring rich stucco frames, spread all over the walls. The stairway, oriented towards the entrance, is constituted of four flights covered by vaults and enriched by ancient sculptures, legacy of the important use of the edifice which housed one of the most precious private collections of antiquities in Rome.

## 15) Chiesa di Santa Caterina dei Funari

Address : Via dei Funari, 00186 Roma RM

Duration : 20 minutes

Openings:

### Overview:

The church of Santa Caterina dei Funari is mentioned for the first time in a document of 1192 as *Sancta Maria dominae Rosae* and *Sancta Maria in castro aureo*. The first name indicates the founder of the church, which originated with the monastery annex around the IX century on the remains of the *Crypta Balbi*, inside the *Castrum Aureum* (from which the second name was derived). The current name refers to the rope makers who operated in the quarter. Between the end of the XII century and the beginning of the XIII century, the building was enlarged considerably, but the current form derives from the reconstruction carried out between 1560 and 1564 at the initiative of Ignazio di Loyola, who had founded a home for poor young women in the monastery. The design was assigned to the architect Guidetto Guidetto, a pupil of Michelangelo. The façade was inspired by late Renaissance examples: two superimposed architectural orders with parastades and Corinthian capitals bordering panels with niches. Among these was a band adorned with festoons and the emblems of the wheel, the rose and the palm; scrolls and the upper tympanum complete the facade. The remains of a XV tower were used for small bell tower. The interior is a single nave and vaulted ceiling, with three chapels each side. It houses works of art by some of the most illustrious artists of Roman Mannerism: *Incoronazione di Maria* by Annibale Carracci, *Deposizione* by Girolamo Muziano, *Assunzione* by Scipione Pulzone, *Storie di Santa Caterina* by Federico Zuccari, *Martirio di Santa Caterina e Gloria della Santa* by Livio Agresti, *Storie di San Giovanni* by Marcello Venusti.



### Description:

The church of Santa Caterina de' Funari was raised by Guidetto Guidetti between 1560 and 1564 in place of the former *Sancta Maria Dominae Rosae*, dating to the 12th century.

The travertine façade, articulated in two orders of Corinthian pilaster strips, is similar to that one of the church of Santo Spirito in Sassia. Santa Caterina de' Funari however is distinguished by the emphasis of its central section and the greater opulence of the decoration focused in bands among the capitals.

On the right side of the church, the coeval tower bell is characterized by a cell with an octagonal little dome leaning on a pre-existing tower.

The aedicule-shaped portal framed by fluted columns gives access to the elegant Late-Renaissance interior of the church. A unique nave covered by a vault is articulated in pilaster strips, analogous to those ones on the church exterior, framing chapels with apses. The church houses valuable paintings by Annibale Carracci, Girolamo Muziano, Federico Zuccari, Scipione Pulzone and Marcello Venusti.

