

Rome and Seven Foundation Churches of Christianity

Vis-à-Vis Events Italy is excited to offer this personalised tour of the seven foundation Churches of Christianity. This event is ideal for devout Christians, but it is also well suited for tourists and history buffs. As our tours are personalised to the audience, we can modify the itinerary to match your aspirations for the trip.

The tour leader is Gianni De Cerce and you will marvel at his in-depth knowledge of Rome, its religious heritage and history – Gianni is a natural born storyteller. Gianni was born, raised, educated and lives in

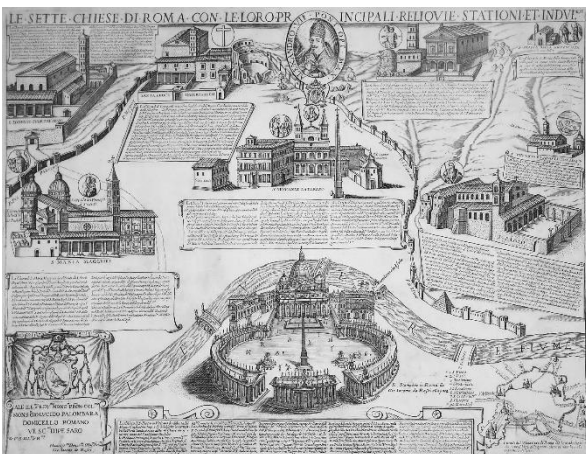


Rome. For a tour of Rome, you need a real Roman. He is extremely active in the Catholic church and hosts many pilgrimages throughout Italy and abroad.

On the left Gianni with Pope Francis on 30 May 2021 for the recitation of the rosary in the Vatican Gardens.

Your host is Vis-à-Vis Events Italy, a new company that was founded by Jan and Tony De Cerce, whose ambition is to help English speaking tourists and business leaders come and explore the real Rome. Jan and Tony have lived in Italy for several years and have been helping many friends plan trips to Italy, decipher Italian culture, venues, and regulations. In their previous lives they were corporate executives in London and New York. The team is rounded out with Anna Picchi, a native Italian who is a certified translator and tour guide. Jan also founded very successful corporate event companies in the UK. Together they have over 80 years of combined corporate executive experience. Obviously, they are well suited to help you plan and fulfil your Roman trip expectations.

This journey will take you to the Seven Churches of Rome and includes the some of the other must-see highlights of this beautiful city.



Seven Foundation Churches of Rome

1. Basilica di San Paolo fuori le mura
2. Basilica di San Sebastiano fuori le mura
3. Basilica di Santa Croce in Gerusalemme
4. Basilica di San Giovanni in Laterano
5. Basilica di San Lorenzo fuori le mura
6. Basilica di Santa Maria Maggiore
7. Basilica di San Pietro in Vaticano

The other spectacular attractions include.

1. Historical treasures – The Colosseum, Roman Forum, Trevi Fountain, Piazza Navona & the Pantheon
2. Shopping at the upmarket Via dei Condotti and Piazza di Spagna (Spanish Steps)
3. Gastronomic delights – we start with an introduction to the Roman food and wine culture and dine in some of the top restaurants in Rome

4. We will have a opportunities to see the famous Roman neighbourhoods – Trastevere, the Jewish Ghetto, Testaccio, and of course Vatican City

We spread the trip over six days running from a Wednesday to Monday. The five days of touring culminate with attending Sunday Mass at Saint Peter’s Basilica and the Angelus in the Vatican, a must see. For the general tourists and history buffs we will fill Sunday with additional sights in Rome’s surrounding areas which are suited to your interests.

The all-inclusive experience is estimated to be €4,700 (Using May 2022 exchange rates \$4,900 or £3,900) per person, based on double occupancy. The price varies on season, individualised requests, and size of group. We finalise the cost when we have agreed and priced your requirements.

The cost associated with the itinerary below is based on:

- A six person group. As the tours are private and we don’t mix groups, you decide on the size of your group.
- June travel, so pricing is outside the crowded tourist season.
- We will travel around Rome in small luxury minivans and walking tours.
- Lodging in our approved four star hotels, (we can upgrade to five star accommodation upon request)
- Dining in top restaurants (a tailored menu is offered with great wines, which of course can be upgraded)
- Entrance fees for all sights









Airfares are not included.

There are limitless opportunities in Rome and its surrounding countryside, so you can let your imagination run wild. We can arrange for a photographer to document the trip, additional days, sights, and other activities such as cooking classes and golf. We are more than willing to accommodate your wishes, as special orders are welcomed.


Itinerary







This itinerary starts on Wednesday at 13:00, which gives you time to check-in and settle into your rooms. Again, we can alter this suggested itinerary to meet your group’s travel and dietary preferences.

| Day 1 – Wednesday |
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| <p>First stop is an introduction to the Roman food and wine culture over lunch. Here you will learn about the Roman food culture, restaurant expectations, eating customs, and taste some fantastic wines</p> <p>After lunch we will embark on a two hour walking tour (2km). We will stop at the of some of the must-see sights</p> |

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|  | <p>Trevi Fountain so you can toss your three coins into the fountain (which is still supplied by water from ancient Roman aqueducts!)</p> |
|  | <p>Pantheon - the Pantheon is one of the best-preserved monuments of ancient Rome, situated in the Piazza della Rotonda. The breathtaking Pantheon is more than 2000 years old</p> |
|  | <p>The Piazza Navona (or Navona Square) is one of Rome's largest and most elaborate public squares, with three fountains and surrounded by several fascinating buildings was a stadium in ancient times.</p> |
|  | <p>finishing at Portico d'Ottavia known as the gate of the Jewish or Roman Ghetto, along the way will we stop for a well-deserved Aperitivo – which is a pre-dinner drink with snacks.</p> |
|  | <p>We will also have dinner in the Roman Ghetto at a fantastic restaurant – a must try is the Carciofi Alla Giudia (Jewish Fried Artichokes) season permitting.</p> <p>After dinner you can explore this area or return to the hotel</p> |
| <p>Day 2 – Thursday</p> | |
| <p>Now we start the heart of our adventure of the seven churches of Rome, and as you probably expected, we start with the Vatican. The Vatican Museums, Sistine Chapel and gardens in the morning ending at a roof-top restaurant with a spectacular view of the Vatican.</p> | |
|  | <p>The Vatican Museums & the Sistine Chapel we get there one hour before opening ahead of the crowds with an authorised Vatican guide. We then have breakfast in the museum and after breakfast you have a couple of hours to tour the museum on your own, with all its history and art at your disposal.</p> |
|  | <p>Vatican Garden small eco bus tour. After spending a few hours on your feet walking around the museum, it's time for a ride to enjoy the gardens. Afterwards we will go to a local eatery for pranzo (lunch).</p> |
|  | <p>The Vatican Necropolis lies underneath the Vatican City, at depths varying between 5–12 meters below Saint Peter's Basilica. St Peter was buried here after his martyrdom in circa 64 AD. It can be very hard to get into the Necropolis, as capacity is very limited, so fingers crossed the timing works.</p> |

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|  | <p>Basilica di San Lorenzo fuori le mura is one of the five papal basilicas of Rome, as well as being a parish church served by Franciscan Capuchin monks.</p> |
|  | <p>After a rest back at the hotel, we head to a fabulous roof top restaurant to take in the views of Rome by night.</p> |
| <p>Day 3 – Friday</p> | |
| <p>This day has the most walking, altogether about 5 km, but at an easy pace with stops for lunch and breaks. We feel walking is the best way to really take in ancient Rome. We walk part of the Appian Way, the earliest and strategically most important Roman roads of the ancient republic.</p> | |
|  | <p>The first stop is the Basilica di San Paolo fuori le mura - The basilica was founded by the Roman Emperor Constantine I over the burial place of Saint Paul, where it was said that, after the Apostle's execution, his followers erected a memorial, called a cella memoriae. This first basilica was consecrated by Pope Sylvester in 324.</p> |
|  | <p>We will travel part of the way along the Via delle Sette Chiese (3,6 KM). In the past you could take this to complete a pilgrimage of the seven churches along this route – but that is 30 km!</p> |
|  | <p>Basilica San Sebastiano fuori le mura fuori le Mura is located along the Via Appia Antica, the ancient road which once led from Rome to Brindisi in Puglia</p> |
|  | <p>The Catacombs of San Callisto (St Callixtus) are among the greatest and most important of Rome. They originated from roughly the middle of the second century - in it were buried tens of martyrs, 16 popes and countless Christians.</p> |
|  | <p>Basilica di Santa Croce in Gerusalemme (the Holy Cross in Jerusalem) - This church is a must see for Christians. This holds several relics including thorns from Jesus' crown and holy nails with which Jesus was crucified.</p> |

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|  | <p>Basilica di San Giovanni in Laterano - Founded during the fourth century in honour of St John the Baptist and John the Evangelist, St John Lateran (Basilica di San Giovanni in Laterano) is the Cathedral of Rome and the most important of the four major basilicas. It is known as St John Lateran Archbasilica, as it is considered the mother church of the Roman Catholic faithful.</p> |
|  | <p>After our tour we will return to the hotel for a rest before dinner, for which we have selected one of the best seafood restaurants in Rome. Seafood in Rome can be lightly sauteed, grilled, baked, eaten raw, or added almost by itself to pasta. The idea is to taste the full flavour of the fish. So, in Rome, you will not easily find fish that's been stuffed or covered with sauce. Some favorites are Paranza, mixed lightly fried fish, and fried tiny squids called moscardini.</p> |
| <p><u>Day 4 – Saturday</u></p> | |
| <p>On Saturday we visit our 6th Basilica and spend the remainder of the day touring ancient Rome, with lunch at a spectacular roof top bar overlooking ancient Rome.</p> | |
|  | <p>Basilica di Santa Maria Maggiore - Situated on the summit of the Esquiline Hill, although enriched by subsequent renovations, this basilica is the only patriarchal basilica of the four in Rome to have preserved its paleochristian structures. According to the legend, Giovanni, a rich childless Roman patrician, decided with his wife to dedicate a church to the Virgin Mary who appeared to them on an August night in 352. Our Lady informed them that a miracle would show the site where to build the church. Pope Liberius had the same dream, and the following day he went to the Esquiline: he found the hill covered with snow. The Pope himself traced the perimeter of the building and the church.</p> |
|  | <p>Our walking tour will bring us down via Viale del Monte Oppio - Oppian hill (Colle Oppio) is the southern spur of Esquiline hill lying between the valley of Colosseum and valley of Suburra. Despite Oppian hill being significantly smaller compared to other hills, it houses a significant amount of ancient historical artifacts, such as the Domus Aurea.</p> |
|  | <p>Colosseum - It is the largest ancient amphitheatre ever built and is still the largest standing amphitheatre in the world today. We will have skip the line tickets and a guided tour for one and a half hours.</p> |
|  | <p>Roman Forum – the forum is surrounded by the ruins of some historically significant government structures and buildings right in the centre of Rome and was originally a marketplace. It was also called the Forum or Forum Magnum. For many centuries, it was the centre of public and political life in Rome</p> |
|  | <p>For lunch we will dine at a beautiful roof top bar overlooking ancient Rome.</p> |

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|  | <p>Altar of the Fatherland / Piazza Venezia - The Victor Emmanuel II National Monument, also known as the Mole del Vittoriano or simply Vittoriano, is a large national monument built between 1885 and 1935 to honour Victor Emmanuel II, the first king of a unified Italy. It is also the central hub of Rome, in which several thoroughfares intersect, including the Via dei Fori Imperiali and the Via del Corso</p> |
|  | <p>The Piazza del Campidoglio was laid down on the summit of the Capitoline Hill, the most important of Rome's seven hills. It is the first modern square to be designed in Rome. The existing design of the Piazza del Campidoglio and the surrounding palazzi was created by Renaissance artist and architect Michelangelo.</p> |
|  | <p>Teatro Marcello located in the Jewish Ghetto Area in Rome, Teatro di Marcello or Theater of Marcellus, is also known as the Jewish Colosseum for its resemblance to the original Colosseum. The theatre rises on the remains of the ancient Circus Flaminius which origins date back to 221 B.C. This large space was used as a market and for popular assemblies.</p> |
|  | <p>Mouth of Truth (Bocca della Verità) – this is one of our family favourites, the legend is if you tell a lie with your hand in the mouth of the monument, it will bite your hand off. My mother terrified me, as Gregory Peck did to Audrey Hepburn in the film Roman Holiday (1953).</p> |
|  | <p>Circus Maximus (Latin for "largest circus"; Italian: Circo Massimo) is an ancient Roman chariot-racing stadium and mass entertainment venue in Rome, Italy. It was the first and largest stadium in ancient Rome and its later Empire it could accommodate over 150,000 spectators</p> |
|  | <p>Piazza di Spagna home of the Spanish steps on Via dei Condotti - Via Condotti leads directly to Piazza di Spagna with the highest concentration of luxury brands in Rome. There are also other fantastic streets like Via del Corso which is a massive boulevard, which runs from Piazza Venezia to Piazza del Popolo.</p> <p>This is a self-guided tour and for a small splurge, we will meet for coffee at the city's oldest coffee house: Antico Caffè Greco</p> |
|  | <p>For dinner we will be in Trastevere, a good place to try some Roman specialities like cacio e pepe, rigatoni al sugo di coda, saltimbocca alla Romana. Trastevere is a magical place, with myriad cobbled streets and pedestrian alleyways to explore - if you still have the energy, a leisurely walk, "passeggiata" in Italian, would be very enjoyable</p> |

Day 5 – Sunday

On Sunday we visit the last of the Seven churches, where we started, St Peter’s Basilica in Vatican city. We get an early start again, as we need to pass security and be in good spot for Mass as there are a few offered on Sundays. Pope Francis addresses the crowd in Saint Peter's Square, with the Angelus, every Sunday at noon (when he is in Rome). After mass, we head to Villa Borghese for an afternoon in the park and then conclude with our gala dinner.

For the general tourists and history buffs we will fill Sunday with additional sights in Rome’s surrounding areas suited to your interests.



Saint Peter’s Basilica has Mass offered in Latin and Italian, there are no English Masses, so the group will need to decide which Mass to attend. However, you have to be dressed in proper church clothes which means covered shoulders and knees



The Angelus - The most important event in the Vatican on Sunday is the Holy Father’s Angelus prayer at noon. He gives a short talk and then says the prayer. The Pope stands at the window of the library of the Apostolic Palace. To see him well, you need binoculars and a powerful telephoto lens for photos. The prayer will also be broadcast on the large screens in St Peter’s Square.



After the Vatican we will have a light lunch and head to Pincio, which is best known for its views of the Vatican. The Pincio is an integral part of the Villa Borghese which is one of the oldest gardens in Rome: The Pinci family commissioned the first gardens here in the fourth century.



For the Gala Dinner we will go to Casina Valadier, a fantastic restaurant in the Villa Borghese with a to-die-for view. This is our dress up night. Discard your walking shoes and put on your glad rags for our dress to impress evening! We know this fabulous location will be the grand finale of one of the most beautiful places you have ever visited

Day 6 – Monday

It is always sad to say goodbye but we are sure you will have memories that will last a lifetime. Of course, you can always extend, and we can also arrange follow-on adventures to other parts of Italy. For example, The Papal Palace and gardens of Castel Gandolfo (the Pope’s summer residence), the beautiful Abbey of Montecassino, The Sanctuary of Padre Pio in Puglia, St Francis and the Basilica in Assisi in Umbria. There are countless places you might like to visit as Italy has always been a destination for those who wish to explore the roots of a world that has produced incredible architecture, and art.