

Getting Around Rome





An Adventure Awaits

Rome is a city of stunning ancient ruins and bustling modern life, and getting around can be an adventure in itself. While its historic core is actually quite compact and walking is often the best way to see the sights, you'll need to use its public transit system to cover longer distances quickly. The key to navigating Rome is understanding its Metro, buses, and the general layout of the city.

Walking: The Essential Roman Experience

For most tourists, walking will be your primary mode of transportation. The distances between major landmarks like the Colosseum, the Roman Forum, and the Pantheon are surprisingly short. By walking, you get to discover hidden fountains, charming side streets, and local shops you would miss underground. However, be sure to pace yourself. Rome is built on seven hills, so be prepared for some slopes and uneven cobblestone streets. Comfortable shoes are a must.



Metro: Fast and Reliable for Long Distances

Rome's metro (subway system) is the quickest way to travel between different parts of the city, especially during heavy traffic. It's smaller than in many other major European capitals, with only two main lines, but it efficiently connects key areas. To use the metro, you'll need to purchase a ticket and validate it. Also, like any major subway, stay aware of your surroundings at all times, especially during rush hour.



The Two Main Lines

- Line A (Orange): This line runs northwest to southeast. It's the most useful for tourists, connecting major stops like the Vip-terminal (near Vatican City), Spagna (for the Spanish Steps), and Termini (the main train station).
- Line B (Blue): This line runs northeast to southwest. It's crucial for visiting the Colosseo (Colosseum/Roman Forum) and Circo Massimo.

Bus System: Covering All the Gaps

Besides the metro, Rome has an extensive bus network that covers areas the metro doesn't reach. While buses can be slower due to Rome's notorious traffic, they are excellent for travel within the *Centro Storico* and for reaching surrounding neighborhoods.



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Bus stops have a yellow sign that lists all the bus numbers that stop there and their main destinations. You typically enter at the front or rear doors and exit through the middle doors. Tickets should be validated immediately upon entering the bus using the yellow or orange machines near the doors. Failure to validate means you risk a hefty fine if a transit inspector checks your ticket.

Tickets and Fares

The great thing about Rome's public transit is that the same ticket is valid for the metro, buses, trams, and urban trains within the city limits. This ticket is called a BIT (*Biglietto Integrato a Tempo*). However, it's important to keep in mind that tickets are not sold on the bus or tram. You must buy them beforehand from metro stations, newsstands (*edicole*), or local tobacco shops (*tabacchi*).

Risky But Rewarding

While walking, the metro, buses, and taxis are common ways to get around Rome, several alternative options offer a unique way for tourists to experience the Eternal City.

- Bicycles: Rome offers numerous bike rental shops, and you'll find designated rental points, often near major parks like Villa Borghese, or scattered throughout the city center.
- Electric Scooters (e.g., Lime, Bird, Dott): App-based electric scooter services have become very popular. These dockless scooters can be found all over the city, unlocked with a smartphone app, and offer a quick, fun way to cover short to medium distances. However, always ride responsibly.
- Vespas: These iconic motor bikes are fun to enjoy the city's charming, winding streets with. They require a driver's license, credit card, and a great sense of responsibility.

Money

Other than walking, you'll need to pay for your transportation in Rome. This can be done through cash or credit card, with the later being more common (and required for electric bikes and electric scooters). It's always a good idea to carry several euros with you. For safety, consider wearing a security belt (which you wear inside your pants to keep your cash and other valuables).



Reflection Questions

1. Rome is a walking city but there are many other ways to get around, such as the metro, public bus, and alternative options like bikes, scooters, and Vespas. How might choosing one of these methods over another change your experience of seeing the city and its culture?
2. What do you think are the biggest pros and cons of renting an electric scooter or bicycle to get around Rome?
3. Imagine you have a long day planned visiting many famous spots. How would you decide when to walk, when to take the metro or bus, and when to try a bike or scooter, thinking about both convenience and how much you'd see?
4. How much experience do you have taking public transportation? How do you think it would be different in Rome?
5. Credit cards are the easiest way to make purchases in Rome, but it's still important to keep euros with you for small purchases, tips, or to have "just in case." Security belts are recommended to use for storing your euros. When you have visited large cities before, where did you store your valuables? What would you do differently?

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