

There might not be a better history lesson than Rome, founded in 753BC (tell your kid the next time s/he says you're old). The city is full of discoveries. Take this Inside Scoop to help navigate.

travel: delighting in the spirit of adventure • a vacation from home to explore places that are not your home • knowing life is different, knowing this is a joy of travel • enjoying the journey, not just the destination • a privilege best used with patience, humour and curiosity • fun • coming home with great tales •

Speaking of Which...
 "All roads lead to Rome" isn't just a proverb about many ways to reach your goal. At the height of its power, Rome's some 30 "highways" radiated out to transport military largely from about 500BC as part of 400,000kms of roads built (the distance from the earth to the moon). Roman road power is indisputable and the history of road construction is a compelling read.

Your Counsellor
 Our knowledge and experience help turn dreams into first-rate vacations. Ask your counsellor about any details, including:

- airport information transfers
- hiring local travel services

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Inside Scoop: **ROME**

Know before you go: travel isn't just your destination, it's also the journey

So much has been preserved that the entire city is jammed full of discoveries that greet you around each corner. With so much to see, plan ahead for benefits such as seat selection and discounts. Tips:

- Be realistic: we know you want value for money in balancing choices and amenities with your budget. No matter, aim to relax and enjoy. Special requests are requests only for such upgrades as room type.
- Be aware of roaming charges on your cell phone: get a package from your provider Internet access is widely available.
- Banks change money to Euros and accept Canadian debit and credit cards. Credit cards with chip technology are widely used. Log the dates you'll be away with your bank and credit card companies.
- If travelling in summer, take sun protection (sunscreen, sunglasses, hat and keep a water bottle filled). It can get extremely hot and there's often little shade.
- Some sites (Vatican Museums and Sistine Chapel) offer special tours for those who are blind or deaf and family tours: book in advance. Most religious sites require bare arms be covered; take a sweater...
- Bring adapter plugs (voltage converter) for Italy's 220 volt outlets. They're sold at stores and many hotels.
- Learn a few words and phrases in Italian—besides being polite to try to speak, it's such a lovely language. Download an app and take Maritime Travel's Inside Scoop: Popular Phrases.

Above all, travel with a positive attitude—with extra security as part of travel, patience and a spirit of adventure will carry you through any experience!

Don't Leave Without This

Although many sites have good walking paths, the ruins are rocky so bring good walking shoes and don't let your trip also suffer a bill for a broken ankle. We strongly recommend Maritime Travel medical and cancellation/interruption insurance, to cover all sorts of unanticipated issues.

"When in Rome...

...do as the Romans do" and take a stroll. However, before you go, become familiar with a map of the city, plan out a few routes and ask your counsellor for suggestions. One of the best purchases (or gift) is the book *Rome Reconstructed* that shows modern day Rome with foldouts of Ancient Rome. In full colour with a detailed map and information on major sites, at just over 100 pages it's small enough to tuck into a bag (there's a version with a DVD). Don't hesitate to wander (tuck a card from your hotel in the pockets of everyone in your group in case you get separated).

Tip: Before you visit, watch a few films whether 1960's *La Dolce Vita* or 2000's *Gladiator* (whether historically correct or not), films will set the scene of the sites you'll visit.

Such Fab Food!

Two things you must eat: gelato and pizza (toppings the stars, you won't see that thick white padding crust in pizzas of home). No matter what trattoria you stumble across, you are almost guaranteed a fine meal. The house wine tends to be good and good value.

- Gelato is the Italian version of ice cream and sorbet, sold in cones at a gelaterie (where gelato is made) or in a dish often with a biscuit popped in. It's dense, unlike any ice dessert, with intense flavours such as *limone* (lemon), *cioccolata* (chocolate), *nocciola* (hazelnut). And, with low butterfat, you can eat more....
- Kids love eating in Rome and it satisfies pasta lovers; try a version you don't normally eat, maybe *nero di seppia* (squid ink), subtle, yummy and very black.
- For a great gift, buy dried pasta at a food store or market rather than a tourist shop (prices will be cheaper and usually better stock turnover). Pasta comes in dozens of shapes and colours and looks terrific when propped up on your kitchen shelf on display before you eat it.
- To restore your energy, drink a refreshing Campari (alcoholic) and soda with *limone*.

Your airline

Sign up online for the airline(s) email/text flight notifications as your flight could be delayed. Transport Canada advises, "Travellers should arrive at the airport earlier than usual, exercise patience and **contact their airline for further information on their flight(s).**" Airline staff are on duty some 2-3hrs prior: due to staffing/security, check-in closes 1hr before departure. If late, you're not entitled to board (or a refund). Unless booked ahead, seats are first-come first-served. Many airlines share flights, called "code-shares." **For check-in and carry-on baggage**, check with your airline as size/weight restrictions vary. **Entry & Departure:** You must have a valid passport www.cic.gc.ca/english/passport/index.asp. Keep a separate photocopy of all travellers' ID pages with your other records or take a cell photo. For non-direct flights, check with your counsellor as European Union customs/transfer procedures differ.



Get Packing Checklist and General Planning & Packing Tips at www.legrowstravel.ca/inside-scoops
 Your sense of adventure & humour!

Ok Ok We're Shopping...

Shopping can be risky given the wide selection and quality. Home to designers, you can spend a fortune (someone else's?) so check department stores, secondhand stores, antique markets and local markets. Don't let the threat of pickpockets deter you, keep money and valuables out of sight and wear purses crossbody at your front. Merchants don't always provide bags so bring a tote. Scarves and material are a good bet, as are t-shirts for kids 3 for 10€. You'll find great leather goods and handmade paper. Why yes, you can buy a pair of baby pants with the Ferrari logo!



Websites and emails in blue are hyperlinked; just click!

Canadians: Emergency? Canada's consulate is at Via Zara 30, 00198, Rome, +39 06-85444-1, and Milan, www.canadainternational.gc.ca/italy-italie/index.aspx. Or contact Global Affairs 613-996-8885 (collect if needed), sos@international.gc.ca, <https://travel.gc.ca/assistance/emergency-assistance>.

Popular Attractions

There are many ways to tour, most of which include lots of walking, ensure everyone has comfortable shoes and check your group's ability to take in the sights—you can't do Rome in a day, but stopping for gelato every so often is a definite incentive. There are also numerous day tours—a *terrific option anywhere* is the hop on and off buses that also provide recorded or live information of what you're seeing. It can be overwhelming when so much is crammed into a day whether looking at the spot where Julius Caesar was killed or developing a growing interest in the history of coins.

Colosseum, one of the greatest feats of Imperial Roman architecture and engineering, is a must see. Although capable of holding more spectators, at least 50,000 people witnessed such events as gladiator battles, seated according to their rank in society (pretty much how stadiums are priced today with bleachers at top/farthest away). In the city centre, it's easy to get to by public transit buses, the Colosseum subway/metro stop (*il Colosseo* in Italian, in the Middle Ages becoming the Coliseum). East from here is the **Roman Forum** (then marketplace and business district) and **Palatine Hill** (the first settlement, later residences of nobility and imperial palaces). **Tip:** if you plan to see all three sites in one day, go to these two sites first as you exit near the Colosseum. Buy discounted combo tour tickets in advance: the special ticket allows you to bypass lines (and you can use the pass over two days). Arrive before or at a site's opening time for easier access and less crowds.

Circus Maximus pretty much looks like a bare and grassed egg-shaped playing field so it's easy to miss. At the base of Palatine Hill, the site remains buried. Built when Rome transformed from a village to a city, largely religious games were held, including chariot races. At the time of Augustus (quick, what month is named after him?), the area held 150,000 spectators, later some 250,000 (more than 15 times seating in the old Montreal Forum).

The Spanish Steps are at the east end of the old city centre (Spagna subway/metro station) in a shopping district off the **Via dei Condotti**. With a piazza at the bottom, it's an area to rest and watch others or the **Fontana (fountain) della Barcaccia**. Grab a bite to eat in the area but *don't* eat or drink on or near the steps as you can be fined. Head west from there through the maze of streets to the **Trevi Fountain** (gorgeous at night) then the beautiful round **Pantheon** with its classic frontage of columns and triangular cap. Although the original was almost completely destroyed by a fire, it was re-made in 118AD. Largely intact now, the temple was turned into a Christian faith church and holds tombs of the royal family. To the south of the steps, window shop at the **Via Veneto** shopping area and walk to the **Villa Borghese** public park.

If you love spas, visit one of the originals. The remains of Roman spas still exist in places such as Baden-Baden, Germany but for the mother of all spas visit the massive **Baths of Caracalla**. This site could hold up to 1,600 people in its various water baths (with very crowded locker rooms). With marble, sculptures and large columns contributing to the complex, there's never been more impressive exercise rooms.

Tip: When crossing roads, be attentive since many drivers...hmmmm...drive as if they are in racecars. Save your visit to the **Piazza Navona** for the evening—the classic meeting place is notable during the day, but it comes alive at night with music and cafes. Paintings for sale are a bit touristy, but everything sets the mood for a lovely evening stroll (stay clear of hiring a horse carriage unless you can blow off a mortgage payment). **Worth repeating:** Some think they can plead being a tourist to get out of a fine but don't try it—*do not* eat or drink at historic sites...not even a local gelato; fines can be significant. Coming home, know your limits and exemptions, www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/travel-voyage/bgb-rmf-eng.html such as on duty free alcohol and tobacco.

Our 24/7 Emergency Service

We constantly survey airlines, local tour companies and hotels to ensure they meet our customer service standards, so don't let a problem ruin your holiday. Nearly all issues can be handled quickly on site—first seek help from the venue's local staff. Otherwise, call our Emergency Travel Service at **1-888-551-1181**. Deposits are non-refundable and non-transferable. Schedule changes can occur and airlines and tour operators have the right to change flight and/or tour times, alter, combine services or substitute accommodations. Your counsellor will work with you to ensure you receive information as soon as possible and ensure satisfaction. See your brochure and ticket terms and conditions.

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