



CUT-OUT-AND-GO GUIDE | RAVENOUS ROME



instant escapes

# Ravenous Rome

Leave the guidebook, bring your appetite

The joy of Rome is that it's impossible to miss the immense sights (you're coming round a corner and... Bam! It's the Pantheon... Pow! The Trevi Fountain, twinkling in the moonlight). But it's all too easy to miss out on the city's most exquisite food experiences – because how do you tell one checked tablecloth from another? Like so... **By Laura Goodman**



**SEE & DO**

Want everyone to know you're a tourist straightaway? Order a cappuccino after 11am. Romans only ever do milk coffees in the morning. Try Sant'Eustachio Il Caffè, right by the Pantheon (Piazza Sant'Eustachio 82; [santeustachioilcaffe.it](http://santeustachioilcaffe.it); coffee £2; ① on map). It's the perfect morning experience. You'll pay extra to sit at a table, so **drink up Roman-style at the counter**, before heading off to behold those iconic Corinthian columns.

The open-air Campo de' Fiori market (Mon-Sat, 8am-1.30pm; ②) is spectacular – arranged in an iconic square, framed by pastel *palazzi*. Bask in some reliable Roman sun while you take in the scene: **bulging bags of buffalo mozzarella, courgettes with delicate flowers intact** and alluring hunks of *porchetta* – tender roast pork, with crispy skin.

Nobody knows how to savour Rome quite like food blogger Elizabeth Minchilli. On her five-hour private tours of the Campo de' Fiori area, and her home turf, Monti, you'll visit trusted butchers, *gelaterias*, cheesemongers, markets, bakeries and coffee shops ([elizabethminchilliinrome.com](http://elizabethminchilliinrome.com); from £145pp). For £75pp, Minchilli Junior, Sophie, runs shorter **street-food tours, stopping to taste arancini (fried rice balls), pizza by the slice and a glass of wine** or two en route. And for £2.49, you can design your own foodie tour using Elizabeth's iPhone app, Eat Rome.

**MORE COFFEE?**  
Save the cafe just around the corner, Tazza d'Oro (Via degli Orfani 84), for later in the day. Its granita is icy, slushy – pure caffeinated joy

**Pillar talk:** dining beside the Pantheon; everything's fresh at the Campo de' Fiori market; when in Rome... drink cappuccino before 11am

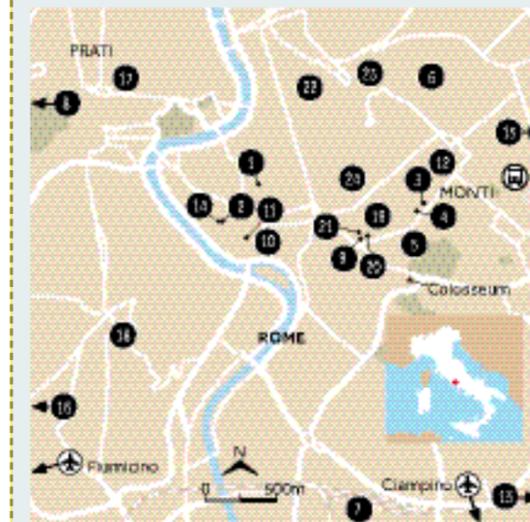
Monti is a fun pocket of the city. Though its **shady cobbled streets are just a boulder's throw from the Colosseum**, it feels miles away. Try the egg and truffle sandwiches at Tricolore (Via Urbana 126; [tricolorepanini.com](http://tricolorepanini.com); about £10; ③). And grab a tumbler of wine at Urbana 47; the screening room at the back has eight rows of lime-green cinema seats – and it shows English-language classics (00 39 06 4788 4006, [urbana47.it](http://urbana47.it); ④).

A striking surprise lives inside the church of San Pietro in Vincoli (Piazza di San Pietro in Vincoli; ⑤): Michelangelo's Moses sculpture – **2.5m of muscular marble intensity topped with a pair of horns**. It's a quiet way to see the Renaissance artist's work up close.

Two special places will change the way you look at ice cream forever. Fatamorgana strips out unnecessary additives, preservatives and colouring, to produce the **purest gelato, in creative flavour combinations such as fennel and honey, or pear and Gorgonzola** (various locations; [gelateriafatamorgana.com](http://gelateriafatamorgana.com); 80p per scoop). Meanwhile, Come Il Latte is indulgent in the extreme. First, you can line your cone with chocolate from the fountain; then you can choose three scoops – *zabaione*, salted caramel and mascarpone with *biscotti*, perhaps – topped off with whipped cream or more chocolate (Via Silvio Spaventa 24; [comeillatte.it](http://comeillatte.it); £3.50 for three scoops; ⑥).

Take a taxi to Eataly, a gigantic food mall that's like **Disneyland for greedy grown-ups** (Piazzale XII Ottobre 1492; [www.roma.eataly.it](http://www.roma.eataly.it); ⑦). There are 26 worldwide, but this is the biggest, with four floors of the finest olive oils, wines, pastas and cheeses, plus cafes and cookery classes.

American *Vogue* once referred to the pizza chef Gabriele Bonci as **'the Michelangelo of dough'** – he really is a master, and an excellent teacher, too. If you'd like to take one of his twice-monthly classes, see [lasferadelbanqueting.com](http://lasferadelbanqueting.com) (two-day courses cost £185). And if it's just pizza you want – see Eat overleaf. >



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**EAT**

● **The proper pizza**

**PIZZARIUM** (Pizza about £8)

**Because:** It's run by Rome's pizza supremo, Gabriele Bonci. The toppings are blinding – grilled peaches and curly endive, for instance. **Travel's tip:** Slices of pizza are sold by weight – go for tasting-size squares and try plenty of different flavours. *Via della Meloria 43; 00 39 06 3974 5416; @.*

● **The perfect taverna**

**LA TAVERNA DEI FORI IMPERIALI** (Pasta around £8)

**Because:** Despite ominous proximity to the Forum, food and service is spot on. **Travel's tip:** Until recently, the menu was spoken, not printed. Occasionally the old ways slip through, so do ask your waiter about specials. *Via della Madonna dei Monti 9; 00 39 06 679 8643, latavernadeiforimperiali.com; @.*

● **The classic dish**

**SORA MARGHERITA**

(Pasta about £9)

**Because:** Roman *cacio e pepe* is pecorino cheese, black pepper and pasta. This version comes with ricotta, making it the macaroni cheese of your dreams. **Travel's tip:** Scour the all-in-Italian menu for *carciofi alla giudia* – a Jewish-Roman fried artichoke you won't find anywhere else. *Piazza delle Cinque Scole 30; 00 39 06 6874 215; @.*

● **Pasta with Prosecco**

**ROSCIOLI** (Pasta about £16)

**Because:** It's a gently swanky spot close to the action, and the yolky *carbonara*, speckled with chunks of crispy fried pig's cheek, is the best in town. **Travel's tip:** This place doubles up as a deli, so you can take a taste of Roscioli home with you. *Via dei Giubbonari 21; 00 39 06 687 5287, salumeriaroscioli.com; @.*

● **The modest Michelin star**

**PIPERO AL REX** (Mains about £25)

**Because:** This restaurant opened in 2011 and only took one year to earn its star. **Travel's tip:** Order the bread, prosciutto and Champagne before your perfect plates come flying in – it's the best way to get in the mood. *149 Via Torino; 00 39 06 482 4828, hoteltrex.net; @.*

**DRINK**

● **The hops haven**

**BLIND PIG**

**Because:** In a den of crates and barrels, you can drink (mainly Italian) craft beers. **Travel's tip:** On Monday nights, €5 (£4.20) buys you a pint and a plate of vegetarian nibbles. *Via Gino Capponi 45; blindpig.it; @.*

● **The mozzarella bar**

**OBIKA**

**Because:** Its location on Campo de' Fiori is fabulous – great for people-watching. **Travel's tip:** Forget dinner. The chunk of milky mozzarella that comes with your drink will do fine. *Piazza Campo de' Fiori 16; obika.com; @.*

● **The chocolate factory**

**SAID DAL 1923**

**Because:** You can get gloopy, cream-topped hot choc in a room covered with vintage chocolate moulds. **Travel's tip:** Take home a bar of dark chocolate dotted with pink Himalayan sea salt (£5.50). *Via Tiburtina 135; said.it; @.*



**ASK THE LOCAL**

Italian-born **Cristina Bowerman** is the chef and director of **Glass Hostaria**, where she holds a Michelin star (*glass-restaurant.it*)

Romans don't eat lunch at 10am, or dinner at 5pm. **If a restaurant is open all day, it's targeting tourists** and the food quality is likely to be low. When in doubt, ask a local – we don't want you to eat badly. I love Cesare al Casaletto (Via del Casaletto 45; 00 39 06 536015; @); chef **Leonardo's tripe with tomato and mint is to die for**. Prati is a neighbourhood that few newcomers know. Since we opened Romeo, our wine bar, bakery and restaurant, new restaurants want to move to the area, **so we feel like trendsetters** (Via Silla 26a; 00 39 06 3211 0120, romeo.roma.it; @). For a low-key drink, far from the tourist circuit, get a taxi to Monteverde, 10 minutes west of the centre. At Litro, **the bartender customises agave-based cocktails to your taste** (Via Fratelli Bonnet 5; vineritalitro.it; @).

**PIZZA ETIQUETTE**

Traditional Roman **pizza al taglio** (literally 'pizza by the cut') is made in huge oblong slabs and cut into quadrilaterals. **Don't embarrass yourself by asking for a triangle**

**EDITOR'S TIP**

Rome is home to the oldest uninterrupted Jewish community on Earth. Get a unique inside steer from cultural association **Rome For Jews** (*jewishrometours.com*), which organises walking tours



**STAY**

● **The bargain**

**HOTEL GRIFO** (Doubles from £49, B&B)

**Because:** This is where locals send friends to stay. It's spotless, brilliantly run and close to the action. **Travel's tip:** The master bedroom has a sunny terrace full of pot plants and it will only set you back about £12 extra. *Via del Boschetto 144; 00 39 06 487 1396, hotelgrifo.com; @.*

● **Sweet and central**

**NICOLAS INN** (Doubles from £83, B&B)

**Because:** This cute B&B gets very regular repeat custom from international lovers of Rome. **Travel's tip:** If you need local recommendations, ask François and Melissa – two of the most clued-up hosts around. *Via Cavour 295; 00 39 06 97618483, nicolasinn.com; @.*

● **The foodie's flat**

**MONTIHOME** (From £125, self-catering; minimum three-night stay)

**Because:** It's the perfect pad, owned by Elizabeth Minchilli (see See & Do), in the

heart of her beloved Monti. **Travel's tip:** Walk round the corner to Er Baretto, on Via del Boschetto, for cappuccino topped lovingly with hearts and flowers. *Via Baccina; montihome.wordpress.com; @.*

● **The swish pad**

**CROSSING CONDOTTI**

(Doubles from £182, room only)

**Because:** It's like living inside a glamorous Italian movie, right beside the landmark Spanish Steps. **Travel's tip:** There's no breakfast, restaurant or room service, but you do get the use of a handy kitchenette. *Via Mario de' Fiori 28; 00 39 06 6992 0633, crossingcondotti.com; @.*

● **The grand beauty**

**WESTIN EXCELSIOR**

(Doubles from £250, room only)

**Because:** It's a handsome beast of a hotel occupying an old palace, rolling out 316 rooms and big stone balconies. **Travel's tip:** Even if you're not staying, grab some wi-fi in the lobby so that you can eyeball the full effect:



**BARGAIN BREAKFAST**

**Pizza bianca** (white pizza) from any **forno** (bakery), with a bit of courgette or aubergine, is a popular morning choice – and way better than any hotel breakfast

**Choc tactics:** clockwise from top left, get your sugar fix at former chocolate factory **SAID dal 1923**; the grand **Westin Excelsior** hotel; sleep chic-ly at **Crossing Condotti**; eat, drink and shop at **Roscioli**; fried courgette flowers and artichokes – a Roman favourite

honey-coloured chandelier lighting, vertiginous ceilings, chequered flooring and more gold than a Ferrero Rocher reception. *Via Vittorio Veneto 125; 00 39 06 47081, westinrome.com; @.*

● **Villa on a hill**

**VILLA SPALLETTI TRIVELLI**

(Doubles from £350, B&B)

**Because:** It's a building of calm and opulence, surrounded by beautiful Italian gardens. **Travel's tip:** Get hot and steamy in the Wellness Centre – the Turkish hammam is delicious. *Via Piacenza 4; 00 39 06 4890 7934, villaspalletti.it; @.*

**GET ME THERE**  
**GO INDEPENDENT**

Rome has two airports, both of which are between 30 and 40 minutes' journey from the city centre. **Ryanair** (*ryanair.com*) flies to Ciampino from Stansted, East Midlands, Manchester, Edinburgh and Glasgow from £44 one way. Buses to the city centre wait in the airport car park; tickets cost £6.50 return and can be

bought on board or in advance from *sitbusshuttle.com* and *terravision.eu*. **Jet2** (*jet2.com*) flies to Fiumicino from Leeds Bradford, Newcastle, Glasgow and Manchester from £33 one way. The Leonardo Express train leaves for Termini every 30 minutes and costs £11.50 one way.

**GO PACKAGED**

Italy specialist **Citalia** (0843 770 4343, *cialita.com*) can organise four-night breaks in three-star hotels in central Rome from £325, B&B, including flights from Gatwick. Alternatively, try **The Co-operative Travel** (0844 879 8220, *co-operativetravel.co.uk*).

**FURTHER INFORMATION**

Rome is a very walkable city; even so, you might want to consider buying the **Roma Pass** (*romapass.it; £28*). In addition to three days' free use of the public transport, cardholders get free entry to two museums and discounts on events and exhibitions. For more information about the city, see **turismoroma.it**.