

## **ROAD SCHOLAR – ROAMING ROME – THE CITY OF SEVEN HILLS**

### **MON. SEP 11 (D) Orientation, Welcome Dinner, Neighborhood Walk**

**Morning:** The Group Leader will be in the lobby of the hotel to greet arriving Road Scholars. You may join the Group Leader for an informal walk in the neighborhood late morning.

**Lunch:** on your own

**Afternoon:** We will gather in the lobby at 4:00 pm for an Orientation session in the hotel meeting room. The Group Leader will greet everyone with a warm welcome and lead introductions. We will review the up-to-date program schedule and any changes, discuss roles and responsibilities, logistics, safety guidelines, emergency procedures, and answer any questions you may have. This is a Road Scholar FLEX program. It offers a more flexible schedule than our traditional programs with ample time for personal independent exploration and several meals on your own to enjoy the cuisine of your choice. The Group Leader will be happy to offer suggestions. Evenings at leisure offer opportunities to make the program more meaningful and memorable through personal independent exploration, attending performances or other events, or simply relaxing and making new friends among fellow participants. The Group Leader will always be happy to offer suggestions. Please note that program activities, schedules, and personnel may need to change due to local circumstances. In the event of changes, we will alert you as quickly as possible. Thank you for your understanding. We will then set out with our Group Leader on a more extensive neighborhood walk to identify the location of ATMs, pharmacies, grocery stores, and nearby monuments. We'll gather again before dinner for a welcome reception at the hotel to begin getting to know our fellow Road Scholars.

**Dinner:** At a local restaurant, enjoy a set menu, plated and served, featuring Roman dishes; a glass of wine and water are included, other beverages available for purchase.

### **TUES SEP 12 (B,L) Ancient Rome, Forum and Colosseum**

**Activity note:** The walk from the hotel to the Forum is .7 mile.

**Breakfast:** In the hotel breakfast room, the breakfast buffet

**Morning:** We will set out on foot for the Forum, the civic, religious and political hub of ancient Rome. Our expert will build mental pictures of the walls now lacking from the foundations. We will see the two remaining **Triumphal Arches of Septemius Severus and Titus**. The **Arch of Constantine** contains friezes and bas-relief sculptures recycled from other arches and monuments. The visit continues to the Palatine Hill. From the southern ledge (unless otherwise restricted), we will peer down to **the Circus Maximus** and over to the **Aventine Hill**. Short walk to the **Piazza del Colosseo**.

**Lunch:** At a restaurant near the Colosseum, we'll have a plated and served meal with typical Roman dishes; soft drink and water included, other beverages available for purchase.

**Afternoon:** The field trip continues to the **Colosseum**. Officially known as the **Flavian Amphitheater**, the Colosseum was the greatest in the Roman Empire. It measured 620 by 513 feet (190 by 155 meters) and could hold more than 50,000 spectators. Architects and researchers are still not sure how the many wonders that have been described by eye witness accounts were actually managed. Historical records as well as popular culture in our time have made it an iconic symbol of gladiatorial combat and the sacrifice of untold numbers of slaves, prisoners of war, condemned criminals, and animals from throughout the empire. Walk to the coach pick up point for the short ride back to the hotel. We will gather in the hotel meeting room for an illustrated lecture by a local expert on the history of ancient Rome from its origin as a small village to its supremacy that lasted nearly 1,000 yrs.

**Dinner:** On your own.

## **WED SEP 13 (B,D) Spanish Steps, Anglo American Writers, Trastevere**

**Activity note:** The walk from the coach drop off point to the Spanish Steps is 1/2 mile. The walk in the neighborhood and to the historic Café Greco is another 1/2 mile.

**Breakfast:** Hotel buffet.

**Morning:** Coach to a drop off point near the **Spanish Steps** where we meet the local expert who will lead the exploration of the **Scalinata di Spagna** — Spanish Steps — the widest stairway in Europe comprising 138 steps. They were built 1723-25 to link the **Piazza di Spagna** with the church of **Trinità dei Monti** above. It was considered Spanish territory because the Spanish embassy was located here in the 17th century. Today it is one of the most popular places in Rome to meet and watch the passing parade of locals and tourists. At an historic café near the Spanish Steps, our local expert will discuss Anglo-American writers who were attracted to Rome. Enjoy a warm beverage as we learn about John Keats's affection for the city where he had a house next to the Spanish Steps. Other writers who flocked to the Eternal City included the Brownings, Byron, Coleridge, Dickens, Hawthorne, Melville, Shelley, and Wordsworth.

**Lunch:** On your own.

**Afternoon:** Free Time.

**Dinner:** With our Group Leader, we will take a public transportation tram to the characteristic **Trastevere** neighborhood on the other bank of the Tiber River. At a characteristic pizzeria, we'll sample a typical Roman appetizer and choose our own pizzas; water and wine are included.

## **THU SEP 14 (B, L) Vatican Museums, Sistine Chapel, St. Peter's Basilica**

**Activity note:** Expect crowds at the Vatican Museums, perhaps the most popular attraction in Rome. From the entrance the walk to the Sistine Chapel is about .4 of a mile along corridors with little opportunity to sit. In the Sistine Chapel there are wooden benches. The pews in St. Peter's Basilica are for people attending religious services.

**Breakfast:** Hotel buffet.

**Morning:** In the hotel meeting room a local expert will present The Treasures of the Vatican. After a break, we will board the coach to the **Vatican** where we will have lunch at a characteristic trattoria.

**Lunch:** At a restaurant in the vicinity of the Vatican, we'll have a plated and served menu; water included, other beverages available for purchase.

**Afternoon:** Short walk to the **Vatican Museums** for our reserved entrance. More 18,000 people visit each day, so expect crowded halls and galleries. The museum complex houses a number of collections: Egypt and Mesopotamia; Greek, Etruscan, Rome; a picture gallery. There are unannounced closings of galleries, so our expert will maximize the time and discuss the most significant pieces available. Michelangelo's frescoes on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, with scenes from the book of Genesis and the Last Judgment are the main attraction of the Vatican Museums. From the Sistine Chapel, our expert will lead us through the back door down to the Basilica of St. Peter. In a side chapel, behind a protective glass, you can see the famous Pietá — Michelangelo's early masterpiece and the only piece he signed. Above the altar stands Bernini's baldacchino or canopy; it is more than 100 feet high. Stepping out onto the front porch, we will admire the oval colonnade designed by Bernini. Coach back to the hotel.

**Dinner:** On your own.

## **FRI SEP 15 (B, L) Olympic Village, Sports Palace, MAXXI, Free Time**

**Activity note:** Coach ride takes 20 miles to cover the 4 miles from the hotel to the Olympic Village. Walking up to 1 mile from the Olympic Village to the Museum of 21st Century Art. The walk from the Trevi Fountain to the hotel is 3/10 mile.

**Breakfast:** Hotel buffet.

**Morning:** We'll board a coach for a short ride along the **Tiber River** to the **Flaminia** district. A local expert will lead our walking field trip revealing Rome as a world capital for art and culture. Our first stop is the **Olympic Village**, built to house the athletes for the 1960 Games. The curvy, fluid lines reflect the style from the years of the Cold War. Moving on, we'll arrive at the architectural gem of the **Sports Palace**, designed by Pier Luigi Nervi, a master of reinforced concrete. Our walk concludes at the **MAXXI, the National Museum of 21st century Arts**, notable for its neo-futuristic design and changing exhibitions. Our art historian will lead the visit of the collection highlights or current exhibition. After the visit we board the coach to the drop off point near the **Piazza di Trevi**.

**Lunch:** At a restaurant near the Trevi Fountain, we'll have a plated and served meal; water included, other beverages available for purchase. Short walk back to the hotel.

**Afternoon:** Free Time.

**Dinner:** On your own

## **SAT SEP 16 (B, D) Piazza Navona, Pantheon, Rome's Legacy, Trastevere**

**Activity note:** Today we cover 3/4 mile of walking on city sidewalks and cobblestoned streets.

**Breakfast:** Hotel buffet.

**Morning:** We'll take a coach to the drop off point closest to **Piazza Navona** where we meet the local expert who will explain how the long oval piazza was built by the **Emperor Domitian (81-96)** for track and field games. The buildings lining the piazza have the footprint of the bleachers. Now the quintessential Baroque piazza, it is home to artists and performers. **Bernini's Fountain of the Four Rivers** — featured in the movie "Angels and Demons" — sits in the middle and **Borromini's church of St. Agnes** is on the west side. We'll then cross the street towards the **Pantheon**, the temple-celestial observatory engineered by the **Emperor Hadrian around 122 CE**. The niches along the interior perimeter are illuminated by the sun at different times of the year and day through the oculus in the ceiling, the only source of natural light.

**Lunch:** On your own.

**Afternoon:** We will regroup at the hotel for a presentation in our meeting room by a local expert on the legacy of Rome, pulling together what we have learned and experienced. There will be time to freshen up and relax before dinner.

**Dinner:** Dinner at a restaurant in the vicinity of the hotel.

## **SUN SEP 17 Jewish Quarter, Borghese Gallery, Farewell Dinner**

**Activity note:** The walk from the Jewish Quarter to the hotel is a little over 1/2 mile. Extended standing at the Borghese Gallery. A wide marble circular staircase leads to the top floor; the museum limits visits to 2 hours.

**Breakfast:** Hotel buffet.

**Morning:** We set out on foot to the **Piazza Cairoli** where a local expert will lead our walking field trip into what was the **Jewish Ghetto** from the 16th to 19th centuries. Jews had lived in Rome since before the Diaspora, but the ghetto was a creation of Pope Paul IV in 1555 during the Catholic Counter Reformation. All Jews were forced to reside in an area of only seven acres in the flood zone of the Tiber River — behind a wall! — with most of their rights and privileges removed. They lived this way until the unification of Italy under a secular government in 1870, when their citizenship was restored. Today the neighborhood is vibrant and bustling. In addition to the **Jewish Museum of Rome** and magnificent Great Synagogue, there are excellent restaurants featuring the traditional cuisine of Rome's Jews.

**Lunch:** On your own.

**Afternoon:** We meet at the time and place established by the group leader to board the coach to the **Galleria Borghese**. A local expert leads the visit of the collection of art amassed by Cardinal Scipio Borghese, nephew of the Pope Paul V. The villa that houses his collection was used as a retreat and reception hall for dignitaries visiting Rome. A connoisseur of art, Borghese acquired — through purchase or intrigue — art that he fancied. His most impressive collection of sculptures was done by Bernini when he was in his early 20s. The paintings include great works by Caravaggio, Titian, Raphael, Botticelli, and others. Some free time to browse the bookshop. Coach back to the hotel.

**Dinner:** At a restaurant in the Jewish Quarter, we'll have our farewell dinner, a plated and served meal with wine and water included. Recap your adventures and share your favorite memories with your new Road Scholar friends.

**Evening:** At leisure. One last visit to **Trevi** for the customary toss of a coin over your shoulder into the fountain basin.