



HOTEL PANAMA GARDEN

Sightseeing Second Day

If you thought Day 1 was hectic, wait until you sample our agenda for Day 2. Fortify yourself with a good breakfast and wear a pair of sturdy walking shoes. The great challenge of **St. Peter's Basilica**, followed by the dazzling treasures of the **Vatican Museums**, await you on this day. And, if you're lucky, you can also take in some of the wonder of the **Castel Sant'Angelo**, that mausoleum-turned-fortress, and even the best of the masterpieces of the **Galleria Borghese** if you can get in. Since it opens early (8am), get an early jump on the day by heading first for the **Basilica di San Pietro** (St. Peter's Basilica).

Start: Walk straight ahead to viale Liegi (on your right hand side there is a tram stop) and take tramway #19 to Ottaviano-San Pietro.

1. Piazza San Pietro

You can even arrive here early, perhaps 7:30am, for a 30-minute walk around before the basilica opens. This is one of the world's most famous squares, designed by Bernini in 1656-1667. It is the gateway to the largest church in the world.

2. Basilica di San Pietro (St. Peter's Basilica)

When the church doors open, rush in. Once here, it's hard to do anything but gasp at the size and the magnificence. The cupola was designed by Michelangelo, and the artist also created the most famous *Pietà* in the world. There is so much to see here that you should allow at least 1 1/2 hours.

With what time remains in the morning, explore the:

3. Musei Vaticani (the Vatican Museums) & the Cappella Sistina (Sistine Chapel)

Should you wish to avoid the cues you could pre - book your tickets online www.myvaticantour.com

These museums are the richest in the world, and will take up the better part of your day -- allow at least 3 hours for a cursory visit. They are well worth your valuable time. There are so many museums here in addition to Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel, plus several papal apartments. A full day is actually needed, but you can cut your visit to a fraction of that by previewing the attractions and deciding in advance what you



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want to see. If you took our advice and had a large breakfast, you can hold out for a late lunch.

After lunch, take bus 40, 62, or 74 to Castel Sant'Angelo/Piazza Pia.

4. Castel Sant'Angelo

Built in A.D. 135, this imposing fortress was originally constructed as a mausoleum for the Emperor Hadrian and his family. The entrance is across from the Ponte Sant'Angelo, the bridge across the Tiber. Inside, you can visit the Popes' Apartments and from the terraces enjoy one of the great panoramic views in all of Rome. Allow at least 30 minutes (more if you can spare it) to look around.

If you've made an advance reservation, take bus 116 or 910 to:

5. Galleria Borghese

Only if you can fit it into your busy schedule, and have gone through the red tape of making a reservation, should you even attempt to see one of Italy's greatest art museums. Sculptures by Canova and Bernini and paintings by Raphael, Correggio, Titian, and Caravaggio are awaiting your viewing pleasure. Allow at least an hour. After you leave, you can stroll in the **Villa Borghese** gardens, one of the most beautiful in all of Italy.

After all this touring, wind down at the Piazza del Popolo (Metro: Flaminia).

6. Piazza del Popolo

With its Egyptian obelisk from the 13th century B.C. and lovely Santa Maria del Popolo church, this is our favorite place to head to for a drink in the late afternoon as the sun begins its descent over Rome. The square is also one of the great places in all of Rome for people-watching. Our two favorite cafes here are **Café Rosati** and **Canova Café**.

After refreshing yourself, head back to your hotel for a rest and a shower before setting out for another night in Rome.

Take bus 23, 30, 40, 62, 64, 70, 87, 116, or 492 to:

7. Campo de' Fiori

This is not only the geographic center of Rome but a cultural center as well and the site of an open-air food market. After the vendors have left for the day, the cafes and the square come alive. It's our favorite place in Rome for an evening *aperitivo* at one of the piazza's cafes and wine bars. Try for a table at **Grappolo d'Oro Zampanò** at



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Piazza della Concalleria (tel. **06-6897080**), which has 200 types of wine. It's found between V. Emanuele II and the Campo.

To cap a long day of sightseeing, hop on bus 56, 60, or 97 and pick a restaurant in:

8. Trastevere

We always like to end our final night in Rome by a visit to one of the characteristic trattorie of Trastevere, where locals tell you that you can experience the "real" Rome (as opposed to tourist Rome).

The district is separated from the heart of ancient Rome by the River Tiber. It still has much of the look of medieval Rome and remains the city's most "authentic" neighborhood. In one of its bustling restaurants, you can have a good and perhaps affordable meal to end a full day -- unless you plan to hang with us for yet another busy day of touring.