

This itinerary is based on a few assumptions: opening and closing times have not changed too much; you will not be ravenously hungry first thing; it's going to be a nice day and probably hot in the afternoon; you won't have the concentration to want to spend too long examining any one thing.

There are three basic bits of Rome I'm sending you to see: ancient Rome as in Julius/Augustus Caesar, medieval/renaissance Rome, and sacred Rome.

Do you have a map? This will make more sense with one. I could send you a simple one, a little worn but still readable.

Some general things: most monuments and museums close in early/late afternoon. I don't think you can make the Vatican Museum given when you are getting in; it's too vast to see anyway but if you could make it I'd send you to the Sistine Chapel. That's why I put the Colosseum first. St. Peter's of course doesn't close and it's nice and cool in the mid afternoon.

GOOD AREAS TO EAT: neighborhood to the E & N of St. Peter's (to orient yourself: when facing the front of the basilica you are looking due west). Avoid the Via della Conciliazione, the huge boulevard that goes east right off the piazza in front of St. P's (bad, touristy food), but any street north of there to the subway stop Ottaviano will have nice, reasonable restaurants or pizza "al taglio" (by the slice) and beer. Another good area is in the medieval quarter across the river from the Castel Sant'Angelo. Just avoid the restaurants right on the famous piazzas- they are very expensive. BAD AREAS TO EAT: right around Termini (the train station), the Colosseum, or the Piazza di Spagna.

OK, SO ASSUMING YOU HAVE TAKEN THE AIRPORT SHUTTLE TO TERMINI--

Get on the Metro Linea B direction Laurentina and take it to the Colosseo stop (2 stops). Come up the stairs and there she is across the street! It's free to go inside, a tour of the upper and lower levels costs money. Right next door (to the right as you look out of the Metro station) is the ancient Roman Forum. You can go in and wander through the ruins (you have to buy a ticket & look for closing times) but you can also see down into it as you walk up the street.

Go back to the Metro, this time direction Rebibbia, get off at Termini, transfer to Linea A direction Ottaviano, take it to the Ottaviano stop. Walk south on Via Ottaviano, 4 blocks to the Piazza del Risorgimento, straight across and 4 more blocks and you will be in the Piazza San Pietro. (If you are hungry, a left off Ottaviano on Via degli Scipioni about a block will bring you to "Non Solo Pizza", terrific beer and pizza by the slice, or there are some good ones off the P. Risorgimento.) Wander around St. Peter's, see the Pietà, take the elevator to the roof for a terrific view.

Now you will have to do some walking, because the medieval part of the city doesn't have a subway near it. Leave the P. San Pietro right at the front. Walk down the Via della Conciliazione to the Castel Sant'Angelo and across the river on the Ponte Sant'Angelo. This is where a map would come in handy, because the streets get real narrow and winding. Cross the Lungotevere and take Via Banco Santo Spirito to Via dei Banchi Nuovi (on the left) which will turn into Via del Governo Vecchio. Keep heading in this direction (not sure if the street changes names again) and eventually you will end up at Piazza Navona. It is beautiful; all 3 fountains are by Bernini and the church is by Borromini. It used to be an ancient racetrack, which is why it's shaped that way. If your feet are tired, stop and get an ice cream (gelato) here.

Leave the piazza by the one of the little streets on the east side (opposite Borromini's church). Follow

the signs, the tourists or just the general direction you are heading 3 or 4 very short "blocks" to the Pantheon, my favorite place in all of Rome. I hope it is open (never figured out what this depends on), since it is much more impressive inside than out. After the Pantheon, continue east to the Via Del Corso (runs N-S). You should be near the Piazza Colonna, which is full of fancy stores and government buildings. Take the Largo Chigi off the NE corner of the piazza; it will become the Via del Tritone. Make a right onto the Via Poli or the Via della Stamperia; both lead to the Piazza Trevi and the famous (3 Coins In The Fountain) Fontana Trevi. If you throw a coin in, legend says you'll return to Rome, but it's really bad for the fountain, so buy a postcard (or a gelato, if you passed one up earlier) instead.

The last haul: go back to the Via del Corso (very famous street: runs N to the Porta del Popolo, the northern gate of ancient Rome, and S to the edge of the Forum) and walk about 6 blocks N to the Via dei Condotti. Take it right (if you want to buy some Italian designer fashion, this is the street!) and it ends at the Piazza di Spagna, which has the very famous Spanish Steps, and also a rather silly and cute fountain where you can take off your shoes and soak your tired feet! There is a Metro stop here (down an alley to the left of the American Express office; it's kind of hidden, this being the ritzy part of town).

That should wear you out nicely! If its too much walking, you could go back to Ottaviano Metro stop from St P's and take the Metro to Piazza Spagna, then walk to Trevi, but you'd miss P. Navona and the Pantheon. Also, if the airport shuttle has a stop at Piramide, you can get the Metro from there to Colosseo, and avoid one transfer at Termini (which can be a pain, and is notorious for pickpockets).

Have fun! Wish I were going to lead you on this tour personally!