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Gay Rome: A Gay Travel Guide to Italy's
Eternal City

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Overview

Rome is one of those cities that has a place on nearly every traveler's bucket list. Few cities in the world mesh modern with historical in the way that Rome can and it's a destination that doesn't disappoint. It's a major metropolitan city and with that comes a huge population of LGBT residents that live and work in the city plus countless travelers that come to behold the eternal city. Still we have to point out that Rome is hardly a "gay" destination and the Italian capital is still highly conservative (and homophobic) and influenced by the presence of the Catholic Church taking hold in Vatican City.

No, you don't come to Rome for the gay scene but since you're coming anyways, you might as well check out a few of these gay specific and gay friendly venues and attractions. And for those really looking to explore a thriving Italian gay scene, you're better off heading to Milan which has the most developed gay scene in the country – though still small compared to other destinations like London, [Paris](#), [Berlin](#), [Madrid](#) or [Barcelona](#).

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Rome is one of those cities that has so much history and sites to visit that you can never see it all. There are many nice neighborhoods in Rome to stay including Trastevere, Monti and Celio. The area near Rome's Termini station is a bit more grungy than some neighborhoods but it's central and much less expensive than other areas. There is not really any gay neighborhood in Rome but there is a small gay street (literary called "Gay Street" which opened in 2007) just beside the Colosseum where you can find a few gay bars, restaurants and hotels.

Transportation & Airport Transfer

Rome is fairly easy to get around and you'll find public transport with the metro, regional trains and buses. Though given all the historic and archeological sites around the city, the metro is a bit limited in the routes offered, so you may find yourself using buses or taxis more than usual. There are a few bus routes that are particularly useful for tourists depending on where you're staying including routes 40, 60, 64, 62, and 81.

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Single tickets for bus and metro cost 1.50€. Taxis are moderately priced and you'll probably pay between 10-20€ per ride depending on where you're going. You can also [buy a 48 or 72 hour pass which gives you public transport access plus entrance](#) and discounts to certain sites in the city.

Rome has two different airports named Fiumicino and Ciampino. For the budget savvy, you can travel to and from Rome city center by bus using a service like Terra Vision from both [Fiumicino](#) and [Ciampino](#). The bus goes from the airport and arrives in Rome's central train station (called Termini). A one way ticket costs 4€ and can be purchased online or on the bus. The ride takes about an hour and buses depart every 30 minutes. For a faster arrival into Rome from Fiumicino take the [Leonardo Express train](#) for 14€. A taxi ride is a fixed price of 40€ from Fiumicino and 30€ from Ciampino and can take 45 minutes to an hour. [Private transfers booked in advance will run about the same.](#)



Gay Hotels and Gay Friendly Accommodation in Rome

Luxury

[First Luxury Art Hotel](#) – with a fashionable bar and Asian rooftop restaurant, plus hot tub equipped terraces, this boutique hotel is filled with contemporary art and set in a 19th century Palazzo. Close by: Piazza del Popolo. *Address: Via del Vantaggio 14, 00186*

[G-Rough](#) – with a stylish, street-level café bar, modern and vintage decor, exposed beam ceilings and parquet floors, this hotel offers suites equipped with balconies, kitchenettes and living rooms – all housed in an amazing 17th-century building. Close by: Colosseum (2.1 km) and the Piazza Navona. *Address: Piazza di Pasquino 69, 00186*

Mid Range

[The Independent Hotel](#) – get ready for a wine bar, rooftop terrace and lots of amazing amenities. Some suites in this townhouse hotel include living rooms, sitting areas and balconies. Close by: The grand Teatro dell'Opera di Roma and Termini railway station. *Address: Via Volturmo 48, 00185*

[iQ Hotel Roma](#) – a guest laundry, children's play area, business center, sauna, fitness room, lobby bar and breakfast buffet are just some of the amenities here. The dining room features a beautiful view of the city from its terrace. Close by: Trevi Fountain. *Address: Via Firenze 8, 00184*

[Hotel Art By The Spanish Steps](#) – happy hours with varied themes and complementary breakfast buffets, suites with whirlpool tubs, premium toiletries, mini bars and more await you at this colorful, upscale hotel. Close by: Spanish Steps. *Address: Via Margutta 56, 00187*

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Hotel Capo D'Africa – take advantage of the exercise room, outdoor bar, rooftop terrace, seasonal cuisine, free breakfast buffet, bike rental and numerous other amenities at this stately, city-center located hotel. Close by: The Colosseum. *Address: Via Capo d'Africa 54, 00184*

Budget

2nd Floor – First Floor and Second Floor are two boutique hotels near the Colosseum and right in the heart of Rome's gay life located on Gay Street. The style of the rooms is simple yet refined and every room is comfortable and unique. They're located right in the center of Rome and steps away from the metro and ancient history the city is known for. *Address: Via San Giovanni In Laterano 10, 00184*

Generator Hostel – beautiful wooden floors, a restaurant and relaxing bar combined with a laid-back setting in this down-to-earth hostel offer ideal hospitality. The corner building dates back to the 1850's and is conveniently located near St. Peter's Basilica, the Pantheon and the Colosseum. *Address: Via Principe Amedeo 257, 00185*

The Beehive – for the budget minded and close to the Colosseum and the Roma Termini Station. Simple amenities include a garden and lounge with seating, dining room and simple café. Rooms are unpretentious with either shared bathrooms or upgraded rooms with private baths and balconies. *Address: Via Marghera, 8 00185*

Guest Houses / B&B

Lisella B&B – small, gay-owned bed and breakfast. The Basilica of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem, the Roman Walls and Monumento a San Francesco d'Assisi are all easily accessed from this no-frills, but peaceful and clean budget B&B. Prices start at 50€ per night. *Address: Via Pozzuoli, 7, 00182*

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Domus Valeria B&B – this is a small, gay-owned bed and breakfast and member of IGLTA.

Prices start at 60€ per night for single occupancy and go up to 130€ for double occupancy in high season. *Address: Via del Babuino 96, Apt 14, 00187*

Ares Rooms – another gay-owned bed and breakfast. This traditional, cozy guesthouse offers attentiveness and quiet surroundings in a relaxing, clean and safe environment.

Interior courtyards, St. Peter's in the Vatican, Piazza Venezia and the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore are just some of the panoramic glimpses available from this 19th century building.

Address: Via Domenichino 7, 00184

Apartments

There are many sites for apartment rentals in Rome, with [AirBnB](#) probably being one of the most popular. Prices are generally comparable to budget hotels, especially if you're willing to get a room in a shared apartment.

There are even a few LGBT-oriented booking sites like [misterb&b](#) with listings from gay hosts for gay guests where you can either rent a whole apartment or a private room in a shared apartment. Understanding Rome's gay scene is much more easily done with the help of a local and apartment sharing is one of the best ways to meet someone living in the city who knows how things work, where and when are the best nights to go out, and what places to eat at and which to avoid.

Special offers: [sign up with AirBnB using this link](#) or [misterb&b using this link](#) you will receive a free \$25 credit to use on your first booking!



Sightseeing & Activities in Rome

You could spend weeks in Rome visiting the numerous historical sites, museums, churches, architectural wonders, plazas and parks. But we know most people will just spend a few days in the city so we've narrowed down our top must-see places on any visit to Rome.

[Roman Forum](#) – one of the world's most important archaeological sites. These ruins are a tribute to a once bustling 7th century B.C. city created from nothing but marshland. Back in the days of Caesar, it once housed restaurants, taverns, shops, markets and more.



[Colosseum](#) – only the largest amphitheater ever, this must-see attraction is perfect for photographers and history buffs alike. Advance booking is recommended as this attraction is one of the most popular in all of Rome. [Buy tickets in advance and skip the line!](#)

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[Piazza da Spagna](#) – located at the bottom of the Spanish Steps and one of Rome's most famous squares. Built in 1723, with 12 different flights and 137 steps, this site is the epitome of elegance and is a particular favorite of tourists and professional photographers alike.

Vatican City – [Vatican Museums](#) and [St. Peter's Basilica](#) are the main attractions here. Afternoon tours tend to be less crowded. Located in the Vatican Museum, the sculpture of Laocoön is a favorite of many. Also be sure to check out the [Gay Vatican Tour](#) offered by Quiiky Travel. You can even get a discount on the tour when booking online. [Click here](#) for your exclusive discount.



[Trevi Fountain](#) – is it a sculpture or is it a fountain? The answer is YES – and a celebration of water's incredible power and ever mutating existence – typical of Rome. Said to embody “the soul of the world”, the fantasy creatures and soft natural lines of this attraction are magnificent examples of Baroque art.

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[Pantheon](#) – this attraction holds the record for most imitated (copied) ancient work, architectural history's biggest brick dome, best preserved and where modern places of worship are concerned, it is undoubtedly the forerunner. According to Michelangelo, this work is not one of man, but of the angels themselves.



[The Maxxi](#) – Roman architecture and art come together to display their contemporary and bold sides in this impressive collection of spacious galleries. From the awe-inspiring design of the building to the modern works contained within, if you enjoy contemporary art, this is a must-see.

[Testaccio Food Market](#) – this is one of Rome's oldest markets with a variety of food including wine by the liter, panini, fish, cannoli and pasta, or knickknacks, clothing, shoes (or most anything a shop-till-you-drop fanatic can imagine) – all at amazing prices. And though vendors are helpful and friendly, you may want to brush up on your Italian. Beyond the market, you can even [book a guided food tour of the best Roman neighborhoods](#).

Gay Tours in Rome (and Regular Tours too!)

There are tons of different tours to choose from when visiting Rome so it's best to decide what you'd like to see and what level of service you want. Some of our favorites are listed below.

[Vatican Museums Untold \(Gay\) History Tour](#) – Don't freak out...but yes, there is actually a Gay Tour of the Vatican, or the Vatican Museums, that is – even [the New York Times recently wrote a story about it](#). Quiiky Travel recently created this ground-breaking tour giving you all the gay (and hidden) insights into the gay culture of the Vatican and the famous artists whose paintings fill its walls. Usually, regular tours don't tell the whole history and hide some parts to the gay and lesbian travelers. The **Untold History Tours** are inspired to give the LGBT community a view of gay and lesbian personalities from the past, stories part of our own history, that make us more aware that we're not the first ones and surely will not be the last ones.

Special Offer! You can even get a discount on the tour when booking online. [Click here](#) for your exclusive discount.

[Rainbow Tour: the Secret Gay History of Rome](#) – Take a deep dive into Rome's secret gay history during this LGBT-friendly tour with guide. Exploring on your own, you may pass the top Rome highlights but not know the gay history behind them. Through guided commentary, you'll learn little-known facts and figures about Rome's gay history. Stops include the spot where Julius Caesar was killed, the Imperial Forum, the Basilica of Santa Maria, Opium Hill, and Rome's Gay street where you'll stop at a famous gay pub.

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[Roma Tour by Crazy4Art App](#) – this app was created by the guys behind Coming Out – Gay Street's popular bar. The app includes more than 130 monuments and places of interest in Rome with 12+ hours of audio to help you explore on a self guided tour. It's available in English, Spanish, Italian and German and works offline even when not connected to wifi. You can choose from 10 pre-selected itineraries or build a personalized route based on your time, availability and location. The app costs 5€ to download.

[Eating Italy Food Tours](#) – choose from either daylight or twilight tours to experience delicious food and amazing wines in Italy's capital. Finding good eats in Rome isn't always easy but these guys are experts and will show you the best hotspots not to miss. They also offer hands-on courses that teach you to prepare a traditional meal using local ingredients or an Italian wine tasting experience where you'll learn to pair 6 Italian wines with regional cuisine.

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[Rainbow Tours Rome](#) – you have the option to join several tours including The Best of Rome, Rome in the Time of Ceasar, and Rome at Sundown. Your guide will take you to some of the most important sites in the Eternal City, like the archaeological zone, the Coliseum and the Roman Forum. If you're visiting during the summer, the Rome at Sundown tour is a great option to beat the heat and see the famous monuments with a unique light and perspective.

Special Offer! You can even get a 10% discount on the tour when booking online. [Click here](#) for your exclusive discount.

Restaurants and Cafes in Rome

Depending on the time of day, there are several restaurants in and around Rome worth a visit.

[Antico Arco](#) – putting a gourmet twist on well-known Italian cuisine, it serves up generous portions of favorites such as pork tenderloin, kebab and risotto in a modern but simple, silver brick-walled and elegant little location. Both the service and the food (with great attention to presentation) are impressive. *Address: Piazzale Aurelio, 7, 00152*

[Taverna di Edoardo II](#) – a gay-owned restaurant with friendly and helpful service, great food and menus in various languages make this eatery a most desirable experience for those seeking fun and unique dining. The owner not only serves but sings for his clientele. Paintings and pictures, combined with the crazy pink appearance of the restaurant itself, enhance your (gay) experience. *Address: Vicolo Margana 14, 00186*

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[Pizzeria Formula 1](#) – for reliable, basic Italian cuisine, this place can't be beat.

Recommended: pizza with 'rocket', tomato and cheese, the mushroom bruschetta, a nice house wine, and/or olive ascolane and mozzareline fritte (appetizers). A casual, enjoyable evening of traditional Roman dining. *Address: Via Degli Equi 13, 00185*

[Ristorante da Dino](#) – delicious, homemade (stress 'homemade') food at affordable prices in a no-frills, casual setting. Recommended: bruschetta, carbonara, veal saltimbocca and an amazing tiramisu for dessert. *Address: Via dei Mille 10, 00185*

[La Carbonara](#) – make reservations! The Carbonara is highly recommended (go figure) as is the restaurant's very own make of beer. If you're looking for an appetizer, the deep-fried artichoke is another favorite. *Address: Via Panisperna 214, 00184*

[Ditirambo](#) – authentic as they come! Superior food and service, homemade sauce and fresh ingredients are just a small part of what goes into possibly the finest dining experience you can have in Rome. *Address: Piazza della Cancelleria 74-75, 00186*

[Necci dal 1924](#) – highly recommended at this thematic, hip and charming bar: filled croissants and tiramisu. Dine indoors or enjoy their spacious garden. It can get busy here! Open for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Wine is available by the glass as are some enjoyable beers. *Address: Via Fanfulla da Lodi 68, 00176*

Gelato

[Gelateria San Crispino](#) – Fresh and all-natural. Types and flavors include meringue, sorbets, cinnamon, ginger, chocolate and more. Maybe the best gelato in Italy. A tad tricky to locate. *Address: Via Panetteria 42, 00187*

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Gelateria de Teatro – Favorite flavors of gelato featured here include raspberry, ricotta, hazelnut, strawberry, pistachio and chocolate. If you're in the mood for something a little more fancy, the tiramisu is reportedly to die for. This is considered one of Rome's best gelatos. *Address: Via dei Coronari 65, 00186*

Note: For more great tips on restaurants and cafes, check out the food website [Rome Digest](#) for excellent local tips all around the city.

Rome Gay Bars and Lounges

Besides the few bars located on "Gay Street" also known as Via di San Giovanni in Laterano, there is really no gayborhood in Rome. The bars are spread out across the city but there are still a decent amount of options to choose from even given the conservative nature of the city.

Coming Out – This is probably Rome's most popular gay bar and it's an institution in the city. It's open for lunch, dinner and until late for drinks and fun. Many people crowd the streets in front of this and the other Gay Street bars during the weekends and on warm nights.

Address: Via di San Giovanni in Laterano 8, 00184

My Bar – This is a small bar and café also located on Gay Street near the Colosseum. It's open during the day for breakfast, lunch and dinner and stays open late until 2am for drinks. There's a small dance floor in the back with a DJ. Quite the variety of beers on tap, super friendly staff, cozy atmosphere and even a sing-along or two if you're in the mood *Address:*

Via di San Giovanni in Laterano 12, 00184

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Colosseum Bar – This is one of the several gay places located on Gay Street. It has more of a café style atmosphere rather than an actual bar. Open early morning until 2am. Don't be fooled by the low-key atmosphere during the day. It's simply the calm before the storm. And with drinks served in plastic cups, feel free to take them outside for some fresh air. *Address: Via di San Giovanni in Laterano 44, 00184*

Garbo Bar – This is a small and old-fashioned bar near Trastevere neighborhood and a good place for a drink or cocktail. You'll find a mixed crowd of men and women of all ages. In medieval times, this place was a horse stable! Not much food here but some bar top snacks can be found. *Address: Vicolo Santa Margherita 1, 00153*

Beige – This is the only gay bar located in the heart of the Trastevere neighborhood. It's open Tuesday through Saturday until 2am (3am on weekends). They host regular themed nights and also offer a buffet every night between 7pm – 10pm. Some say, the best cocktails in Trastevere are found right here; and the buffet should not be missed. *Address: Via del Politeama 13, 00153*

Freni e Frizioni – Vintage furniture, lovely atmosphere and the perfect place for either a late night or slightly earlier in the day aperitivo (which, by the way, comes highly recommended). The buffet and drinks are reasonably priced. It can get busy, so be prepared. You'll find a young and alternative crowd, often frequently by students. The buffet goes from 7pm – 10pm. *Address: Via del Politeama, 4/6, 00153*

Rome Gay Clubs and Parties

Clubs

Muccassassina – This is a mixed but very gay party held every Friday night at a club called Qube Disco. The atmosphere is very friendly and there are 3 large and separate dance floors with different music. You'll also find drag performances and a large dark room. *Address: Via di Portonaccio 212, 00159*

G I AM – This is a Saturday night gay party located at a club called Planet Rome. It takes place from October – June and is open until 5:30am. *Address: Via del Commercio 36, 00154*

Amigdala – This is an electro/techno gay party located at Animal Social Club every other Saturday. *Address: Via di Portonaccio 23, 00153*

Gloss @ L'Alibi – This is one of the only Thursday night gay parties you'll find in Rome. They offer drag shows, go-go dancers and great DJ's. The party starts at 11:30pm and goes until 5am. *Address: Via di Monte Testaccio 44, 00153*

Frutta e Verdura – This is an afterhours gay dance party that starts at 4:30am located at a place called Bunker Club – a large cruising club. They have a terrace, live DJs, dance floor and a darkroom / cruising area. *Address: Via di Santa Passera 27, 00146*

Cruising in Rome & Men Only

Like many places in Italy, you may be required to have a membership card in order to enter gay cruising bars and saunas. You can purchase the membership onsite at any of the bars which costs between 8€ to 15€ depending on if it's a one-time pass or year-long membership.

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Bunker Club – This is a typical cruising bar with darkroom, strip shows and video shows. They host different themes each night and also host the after-hours party called **Frutta e Verdura**. *Address: Via di Santa Passera 27, 00146*

Europa Multiclub – This is a typical sauna and sex club with all the expected amenities including a Turkish style bath and a small gym. *Address: Via Aureliana 40, 00187*

Apollion – This is a small gay sauna open every day from 2pm -11pm. They also offer massages onsite. *Address: Mecenate 59a, 00184*

Gay Hangouts in Rome

The only centralized gay hangout in the city is Via San Giovanni in Laterano, also known as “Gay Street.” This small stretch of gay venues is just a stone’s throw away from the Colosseum and it’s a good place to start if you want to get a feel for the gay scene in Rome. This area really heats up in summer with the start of the Summer Gay Village, a popular LGBT event in Rome.

If you have a bit of extra time, you can visit the gay beach which is near Ostia – about 29 kilometers from Rome. A nice option if you want to get out of the city but probably not ideal if you’re only in town for a few days. The popular gay beach is called Il Buco and is located between Settimo Cielo and Meterranea restaurants.

Popular Gay Events in Rome

Rome Gay Pride – the gay pride in Rome takes place each June and has been going strong for more than a decade. Tens of thousands join in the streets for the march, making a statement towards the Italian government in an effort to advance LGBT rights in the country. But don’t worry – the parade still has plenty of rainbow flags and bright colors and come nightfall, you’ll find great parties throughout the weekend.

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[Summer Gay Village](#) – this summer long event takes place from June to September. You'll find lots of great activities and events during the 10 weeks including a Bear's Village, Concerts, dance performances, theater and free film screenings. The venue and contact details change each year so check the website for the most updated information. This is a popular summer event and perhaps a great reason to visit Rome during its hot season. The event attracts over 200,000 visitors both gay and straight alike.

Day Trips from Rome

[Tivoli](#) – If you have a day to spare, make the short trip out to Tivoli, which is located 25 km from Rome. The main sites in Tivoli include [Villa Adriana \(Hadrian's Villa\)](#) and [Villa D'Este](#). Built between 118 and 134 A.D., this was originally constructed as an elaborate summer retreat filled with pools, statues, fountains, bath houses, libraries, theaters and more. Villa D'Este is full of charm, character and gorgeously maintained grounds and has possibly the most impressive display of fountains in the world. You can get to Tivoli by either bus or train, but bus is might be more convenient as the train station in Tivoli is not in the city center. To find the bus, take Metro Line B towards Rebibbia. Get off at Ponte Mammolo where you can buy your bus ticket and take the Rome-Tivoli bus, which stops in Tivoli just outside Hadrian's Villa. The ride takes about 45 minutes to an hour.