The Eternal City’s streets and piazzas teem with trattorias, ristorantes, pizzerias and wine bars. Eat and drink your way around Rome, and if you feel overwhelmed by the choices, make use of the menu decoder in this guide.

**EAT**

**Ai Tre Scalini**
Italian
A favorite since 1895, the “Three Steps” is always packed, with crowds spilling out of the funky violet-painted door and into the street. Savor an array of cheeses, salami and dishes like polpette al sugo (meatballs in tomato sauce), washed down with superb choices of wine or beer.
» facebook.com/aitrescalini; Via Panisperna 251

**Amando al Pantheon**
Italian
With its dedication to old-school Roman cuisine and its cozy atmosphere, this is a regular go-to for local foodies. It’s been around for more than 50 years. Reservations are essential.
» armandoalpantheon.it; Salita dei Crescenzi 31

**Caffetteria Chiostro del Bramante**
Café
Few cafés are as beautifully sited as this one, on the first floor of Bramante’s Renaissance cloister. It has outdoor tables and an all-day menu offering cakes, coffee, baguettes and risottos.
» chiostrodelbramante.it; Via Arco della Pace 5

**Da Augusto**
Trattoria
Bag an outside table and dig into some fabulous mamma-style cooking on one of Trastevere’s prettiest piazza terraces. Hearty portions of Roman classics are dished up as are lots of rabbit and veal. Winter dining is around vintage Formica tables in a bare-bones interior. Cash only.
» 39-06-580-3798; Piazza de’ Renzi 15

**Flavio al Velavevodetto**
Roman
In a rustic Pompeian-red villa, this casual eatery is celebrated locally for its no-nonsense Roman cuisine. Expect antipasti of cheeses and cured meats, and huge helpings of homemade pastas.
» ristorantevelavevodetto.it; Via di Monte Testaccio 97

**Hostaria Romana**
Roman
This great dining spot near the Trevi Fountain cooks up classics like grilled goat chops, veal cutlets and roast sucking pig. Sign your name on the graffiti-covered walls before leaving.
» ristorantespirodivino.com; Via del Boccaccio 1

**I Dolci di Nonna Vincenza**
Café
Bringing the flavors of Sicily to Rome, this pastry shop is a real joy. Browse the cakes and dolci (sweet pastries) in the old wooden dressers before adjourning to the bar to tear into the selection of creamy, flaky, puffy pastries and ricotta-stuffed cannoli.
» dolcinonnavincenza.it; Via Arco del Monte 98a

**Imágo**
Italian
The panoramas from this rooftop restaurant are special, extending to the great dome of St. Peter’s Basilica. Complementing the views are the bold, Michelin-starred, modern-Italian creations of chef Francesco Apreda.
» imagorestaurant.com; Piazza della Trinità dei Monti 6

**Necci dal 1924**
Café
An all-round hybrid in the edgy Pigneto district, Necci opened as a gelateria in 1924 and was later a favorite of film director Pier Paolo Pasolini. These days, it caters to a buoyant crowd with its laid-back vibe, retro interior and all-day food. Huge kudos for the fabulous summertime terrace.
» necci1924.com; Via Fanfulla da Lodi

**Pizzarium**
Pizza
The takeaway of Gabriele Bonci, Rome’s acclaimed pizza king, serves the city’s best sliced pizza, bar none. Scissor-cut squares of soft, springy base are topped with seasonal ingredients, such as artichoke, and served on paper trays for immediate consumption.
» bonci.it; Via della Meloria 43

**Spirito di Vino**
Italian
The restaurant’s trademark dish is maiale alla mazia, an ancient pork and red-wine stew said to have been a favorite of Julius Caesar. Between courses, diners can visit the wine cellar, dating to 80 BC.
» ristorantespirtodivino.com; Via dei Genovesi 31

**Vineria II Chianti**
Tuscan
With a name like Il Chianti, this pretty, ivy-clad wine bar can only be Tuscan. Dig into superb dishes like stracotto al Brunello (beef braised in Brunello wine) or handmade pasta laced with lardo di Colonnata (aromatic pork fat).
» chiantisteriatoscana.it; Via del Lavatore 8–82a

**LOCAL KNOWLEDGE**

For most of the day, Pastificio (Via della Croce 8) goes about its business as a fresh pasta shop, but at lunchtime it turns itself into the Tridente district’s best budget diner. Locals pile in to fill up on the daily pasta dishes (there’s a choice of two every day, generally one meat and one vegetarian). You’re also given a cup of complementary house wine and water, provided you eat in. People jovially elbow their way through to the narrow ledge tables against the walls.
DRINK

Anticafé Roma $ 
Anticafé doesn’t charge for its drinks. Instead you pay for the time you spend – less and less for successive hours, too. With that you’re free to hang out and do whatever: use the Wi-Fi, play board games, read on the sofa, drink. You can BYO and there’s also a bar with free drinks and snacks. » anticafee.eu/roma; Via Veio 4b

Antico Caffè Greco $$$
Rome’s oldest café, open since 1760, is still working the look with the utmost elegance: age-spotted gilt mirrors, scarlet flock walls, and waiters in black tailcoats. Prices reflect this amazing heritage, but are cheaper if you stand. » anticocaffegreco.eu; Via dei Condotti 865

Bar San Calisto $ 
Head to this bar for old-world atmosphere and low prices. It’s famous for its chocolate – come for the chocolate gelato in summer. Another speciality here is sambuca con la mosca (“with flies” – raw coffee beans). » Piazza San Calisto 3–5

Barnum Cafe $ 
With its vintage furniture and white bare-brick walls, Barnum is a relaxed spot for a breakfast cappuccino, a light lunch or a late-afternoon drink. Come evening, a coolly dressed-down crowd sips seriously good cocktails. » barnumcafe.com; Via del Pellegrino 87

Il Palazzetto $$
No terrace features such a fine view of the Spanish Steps over an expertly shaken cocktail. Ride the elevator up from the discreet entrance on narrow Vicolo del Bottino or look for steps leading to the bar from the top of the steps. Given that everything is alfresco, the bar is open only in dry weather. » hotelhassierroma.com; Vicolo del Bottino 8

Pepy’s Bar$
Play the Roman at this down-to-earth, neighborhood café in Trastevere: sit at a bistro table on the narrow sidewalk terrace and watch the fountains gush and the motorini whizz by on Piazza Barberini. It is an ideal spot for a relaxed drink any time of day, and its all-day sandwiches – made with perfectly square, crustless white bread – are almost too beautiful to eat. » Piazza Barberini 53

Il Sori $ 
Every last salami slice and chunk of cheese has been selected from Italy’s finest artisanal and small producers at this gourmet wine bar and bottega (shop). Interesting and unusual wine tastings, theme nights, “meet the producer” soirées and other events cap off what’s already a memorable drinking (and dining) experience. » ilsori.it; Via dei Volsci 51

Keyhole $$$
The latest in a growing trend of hip, underground bars in Rome, Keyhole has no identifiable name outside; a black door smothered in keys; and Prohibition-era decor, including Chesterfield sofas, dim lighting and a craft cocktail menu. Not sure what to order? Ask the talented mixologists to create your own custom cocktail. » Via dell’Arco di San Calisto 17

Spirito $ 
Spirito is spirited away behind a simple white door at the back of a sandwich shop in Pigneto. This New York Prohibition-style speakeasy has expertly mixed craft cocktails, gourmet food, live music and shows, roulette at the bar and a fun-loving crowd. » clubspirito.com; Via Fanfulla da Lodi 53

Zuma Bar $
Dress up for a drink on the rooftop terrace of Palazzo Fendi of fashion-house fame. Few cocktail bars in Rome are as sleek, hip or sophisticated as this. City rooftop views are predictably fabulous. Cocktails mix exciting flavors like shiso with juniper berries, elderflower and prosecco. » zumarestaurant.com; Via della Fontanella di Borghese 48

Gelato

Il Caruso 
(Via Collina 15) A small but excellent selection of creamy flavors

Gelarmony
(Via Marcantonio Colonna 34) A Sicilian gelateria specializing in island flavors like pistachio or cassata

Dei Gracchi
(Via di Ripetta 261) A taste of heaven in several locations across Rome

Fior di Luna
(Via della Lungaretta 96) Great artisanal ice cream in Trastevere

Gelateria del Teatro
(Via dei Coronari 65) Around 40 choices, all made on site
**GOOD TO KNOW**

While you’re sampling Rome’s food and drink, keep this list of key terms handy, and make sure to tick off the city’s specialties.

**ABBACCHIO AL FORNO**
lamb roasted with rosemary and garlic, usually accompanied by rosemary-roasted potatoes

**AGNELLO ALLA CACCIATORA**
lamb “hunter-style” with onion and fresh tomatoes

**BACON:**
salt cod, often served deep-fried in batter in the Roman-Jewish tradition and served fast-food style

**BRESAOLA**
wind-dried beef, a feature of Roman–Jewish cuisine, served as a replacement for prosciutto (dry-cured ham)

**BRUSCHETTE**
grilled bread rubbed with garlic, splashed with olive oil and sprinkled with salt, most commonly then topped by tomatoes

**BUCASTI ALL’AMATRICIANA**
thick spaghetti with tomato sauce, onions, pancetta, cheese and chili; originated in Amatrice, a town east of Rome, as an adaptation of spaghetti alla gricia

**CAICIOFI ALLA ROMANA**
artichokes stuffed with a paste of garlic, parsley, mint and olive oil, and then boiled in a mix of broth and white wine until soft

**CODA ALLA VACCINARA**
beef tail stew, with garlic, parsley, onion, carrots, celery and spices; a dish developed when abattoir workers got the cheapest cuts of meat

**FINOCCHIO SELVATICO**
wild fennel

**FIORI DI ZUCCA**
zucchini flowers, usually stuffed with mozzarella and anchovies and then fried

**FRUTTI DI MARE**
seafood; usually served as a sauce with pasta, comprising tomatoes, clams, mussels and perhaps prawns and calamari

**NOCCHI ALLA ROMANA**
semolina-based miniature dumplings baked with ragù (meat-based sauce) or tomatosugo; traditionally served on Thursdays

**INVOLTINI**
thin slices of veal or beef, rolled up with sage, or vegetables and mozzarella.

**MINESTRA DI BISILLA CON PASTA E BROCCOLI**
skate soup with pasta and broccoli; Roman-Jewish dish served only at the most traditional restaurants

**PASTA CON LENTICCHIE**
popular local dish of pasta with lentils

**PASTA CON CECI**
pasta with chickpeas; warms the cockles in winter

**PECORINO ROMANO**
a sharp, salty, sheep’s milk cheese, often used for grating and on pasta

**PIZZA BIANCA**
plain “white pizza,” brushed with salt, olive oil and often rosemary; these days it might come with optional toppings

**PIZZA ROSSO**
“red pizza” with tomato sauce and toppings

**POLLO ALLA ROMANA**
chicken cooked in butter, marjoram, garlic, white wine and tomatoes or peppers

**POLPETTE AL SUGO**
meatballs served with tomato sauce

**PORCHETTA**
a hog roasted on a spit with herbs, including lots of fennel; the best comes from Ariccia, in the hills south of Rome

**RAGÙ**
classic Italian meat sauce traditionally made by slowly stewing cuts of meat, or mince, in a rich tomato sauce
WHERE TO STAY

for no frills
Althea Inn $
In an apartment block near the Aurelian Walls, this friendly B&B offers superb value and access to Testaccio’s bars and restaurants. » altheainn.com

for neighborhood charm
Arco del Lauro $$
On a peaceful, cobbled lane in Trastevere, this guesthouse sports six gleaming white rooms that are comfortable and spacious. » arcodeallauro.it

for sleeping in style
Argentina Residenza $$
Argentina Residenza provides an affordable refuge that cuts a contemporary dash in the heart of the historic center. » argentinaresidenza.com

for party people
Generator Hostel $
Hostelling just got a whole lot hipper in Rome thanks to this uber-cool bash-throwing hostel with a sensational rooftop lounge. » generatorhostels.com

for secluded luxury
Hotel Sant’Anselmo $$$
This villa hideaway in the city’s beautiful hilltop Aventino district mixes Liberty-style furniture with modern colors. » aventinohotels.com

for ancient-world enthusiasts
Inn at the Roman Forum $
On a quiet street by the Imperial Forums, this chic hotel has a panoramic terrace and its own small Roman ruins. » theinnattheromanforum.com

EATING

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Vineria Il Chianti

DRINKING

Anticafé Roma
Antico Caffè Greco
Bar San Calisto
Barnum Cafe
Il Palazzetto
Il Sori
Keyhole
La Bottega del Caffè
Pepy’s Bar
Spirito
Zuma Bar

SLEEPING

Althea Inn
Arco del Lauro
Argentina Residenza
Generator Hostel
Hotel Sant’Anselmo
Inn at the Roman Forum

Accommodations: $ <150, $$ 150-250, $$$ >250

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