

ROME: THE ETERNAL CITY

ROME

Ah, Roma! Italy's cosmopolitan capital is a city of layered juxtaposition if there ever was one, constantly wrestling with its identity of the classical past and its modernity, the center of the Italian brand in both. It is often known as the "City of Seven Hills," but more frequently and romantically is known as "The Eternal City," first coined by Tibullus in the 1st Century BC. Indeed, Rome is Eternal. With a history spanning 28 centuries, it is one of the oldest continually-occupied places in Europe, now the third most populated metropolis in the European Union. The seat and namesake of the Ancient Empire, home to the then Papal States and now independent nation of the Vatican, it is also the birthplace of the Renaissance, the Baroque, and the Neoclassical. Fitting as one of the world's most visited UNESCO World Heritage sites, Rome, perhaps even more so than Paris, is a romantic's dream, layered in mythology and movie settings that continually capture the world's heart. There's something about wandering the Forum at night--with the monuments all lit up as though they are revealing their mysteries, watching a Vespa zip by on the cobbles, and then happening upon a little cafe that serves homemade pasta--that is simply entrancing.

Rome is divided by the Tiber River, where the bulk of the old city center sits to the East, the famous Piazza Navona and the Pantheon at its center. To the south, the cluster of the ancient city relics including the Colosseum, Forum, and the crowning Campodoglio anchor the prominent historical sites. To the North, the Villa Borghese sits high on the hill, accessed by the Spanish Steps and the windy Via Veneto. The eminence of Vatican City sits due West, from the Castelo S. Angelo directly into the piazza and Basilica of San Pietro.



ROME

SEE - THE MAIN ATTRACTIONS

The Vatican ✦

The world's smallest country worth the majority of a full day while in Rome, notably for the Vatican Museum & the Sistine Chapel, one of the world's finest collections of art. Bramante and Michelangelo's St. Peter's Basilica is undoubtedly one of the world's (largest &) most impressive churches; climb to the top of the dome for a pano view, and take photo ops in the impressive circular piazza fronting the basilica. You can send postcards from the post office, but no special passport stamps can be had. The Vatican is best seen by a private tour to skip the enormous lines to get into the museum; and while a guide isn't essential for the cathedral, it's best to continue your museum tour into the church for a full walk-through. Consider an early access tour to limit crowds. We like Context tours for their intellectual perspective, or this highly rated private tour option.

Villa Borghese and Galleria Borghese ✦

Perhaps Rome's most lovely park, remade in the 19th century, with lovely allées for strolling. There's a pond with row boats, and the Galleria Borghese is perhaps the second best art museum after the Vatican (albeit quite small). Advance reservations to the museum are required (note their website seems to be acting up). Next door is the Villa Medici, whose 6 salons were transformed into stunning spaces by Fendi's Creative Director.

The Forum, Colosseum and Campidoglio ✦

The heart of ancient Rome sits around the Ancient Forum and Colosseum. Our favorite thing to do in Rome is stroll the edges of the well-illuminated Forum by night, but a daytime tour of both spaces is best to understand the historical significance. Below the Forum is the noted Circus Maximus and Caracalla Baths. You'll undoubtedly see the Monument to Vittorio Emanuele affectionally called the "Wedding Cake" for its ornate facade, fronting Michelangelo's Piazza del Campidoglio. This special tour offers access to the Colosseum floor for the gladiator buff, or tour the entire area with a guide.

Pantheon, Campo di Fiori, & Piazza Navona

Two lovely plazas in the center, plus the ancient temple with an oculus-topped dome and Raphael's tomb.

Via del Corso, Piazza del Popolo, Spanish Steps, Fontaine del Trevi

Running the central spine of the city, Via del Corso is Rome's principal shopping street, linking the iconic Popolo Plaza from the gates of Rome to the Wedding Cake; just to the avenue's East is the Trevi Fountain and Spanish Steps. Nearby, the stunning Galleria Doria Pamphilj is home to famous artworks and known for hosting elaborate fashion shows.

Chiesa alle Quattro Fontane

Borromini's Baroque gem of a church.

Trastevere

Bohemian, working-class neighborhood, exceedingly popular - with small cafes and great for strolling.



Trastevere



Galleria Borghese



Pantheon

ROME

SEE - SETTING THE SCENE

Introductory Tours

Vespa Sidecar tour of the classic sites is a good intro to the city and Scooteroma has a variety of options including Rome by Twilight or a Culinary tour by moped.

This fun tour wisps around town in a vintage Fiat and comes with a photographer.

SEE - CULINARY ADVENTURES

Pasta Making and Tiramisu Cooking Class

Learn to cook Italian classics from funny, friendly, and helpful instructors in a beautifully designed kitchen. Prefer a food tour? This is a fun one called the “no diet tour.”

Testaccio Market

Food market with over 100 stalls. Open daily in the mornings for fresh fruit, veggies, and some prepared meals.

Campagna Amica Market

Weekend farmers market with vendors from across the region.

Frascati Wine Tour

Visit this neighboring wine region to taste local pours. Note: most tours (like this one) require you to train to Frascati. Or this alternative tour is one of the few that will pick up/drop off in Rome.

SHOPPING

Via del Corso

The city’s main shopping avenue.

Chez Dédé

Boutique and gallery with a fun, classic, and retro vibe. Its street, Via di Monserrato, is a hotspot for artists and cool boutiques.

Essenzialmente Laura

Custom perfume store. Their most famous scent is Caronari 57.

Via dei Condotti

Thoroughfare with big brands.

Flakes

Italian pottery, furniture, and decor store.

Antica Manifattura Cappelli

The oldest hat workshop in Rome. Get a custom hat made by local artists.

Mondelianni

80 year old Italian sunglasses brand with 2 locations.



Via del Corso



Tour the city by Vespa



Testaccio Market

ROME

SEE - FURTHER AFIELD

Villa d'Este ✨

This stunning 16th garden is one of the best in Europe, noted for its use of gravity to power hundreds of fountains across the property. Makes for a unique day trip. A UNESCO World Heritage Site just East of Rome.

Hadrian's Villa ✨

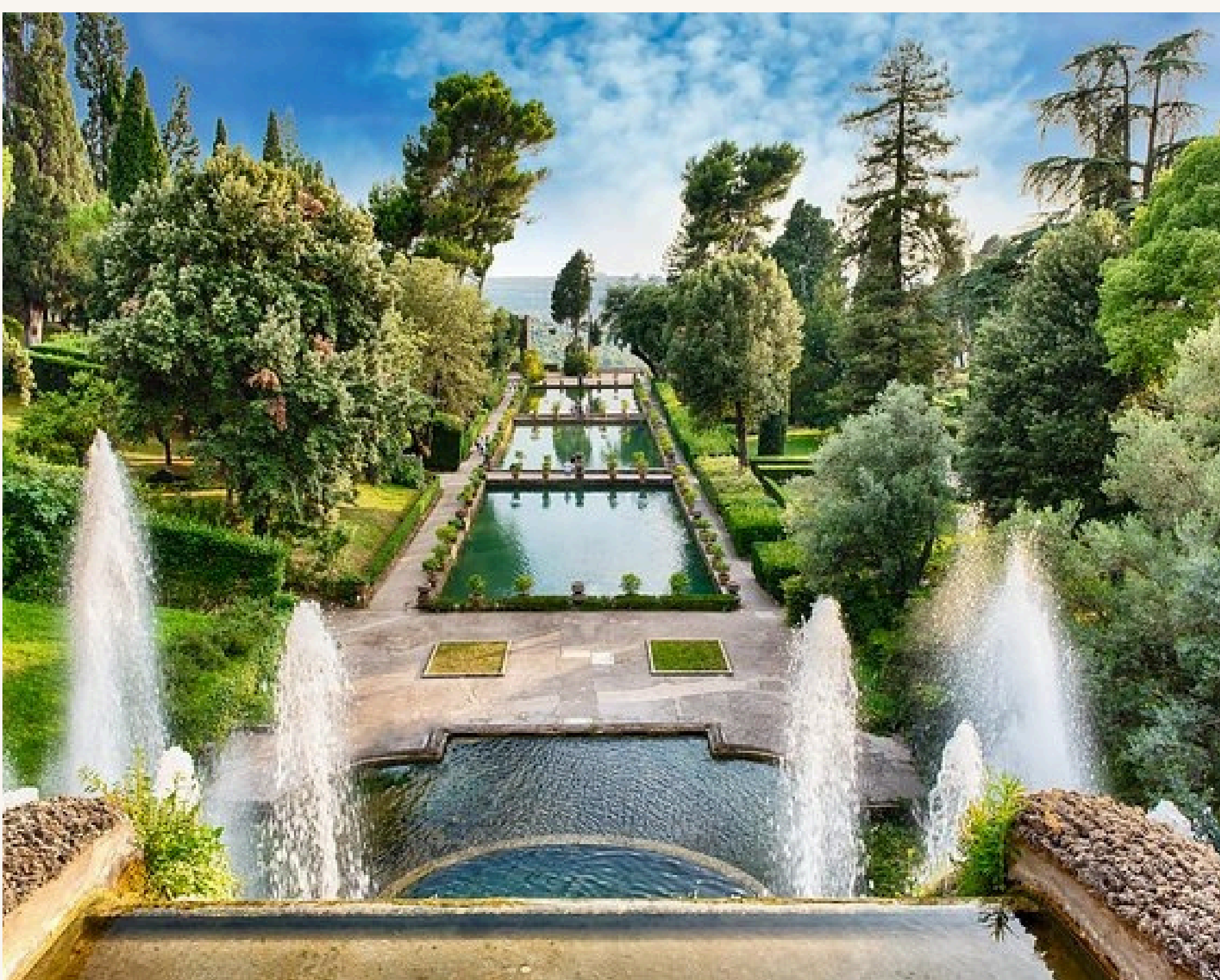
Nearby the Villa d'Este is this Ancient Roman complex, built by the Emperor Hadrian around 120 AD. It is the most complex villa of its time, and now a UNESCO site. This private half day tour takes you to both Villa d'Este and Hadrian's.

Appian Way E-Bike Tour

This fun tour bikes along the Appian Way, the ancient road linking the empire. Traverse past aqueducts and along cedar tree allées.

EUR - Museum of Roman Civilization

The EUR was Mussolini's 1930s vision for a new Rome in a suburban district just south of the city. While the austere modernist buildings are an architect's fantasy, the real reason to come here is for the giant model of Ancient Rome in this museum.



Villa d'Este



Hadrian's Villa



Appian Way

ROME



Ditta Trinchetti



Ai Tre Scalini



Osteria Margutta

EAT

CASUAL

Il Maritozzo Rosso

Get the famous Roman pastry, maritozzo, as well as exceptional pasta dishes.

Ditta Trinchetti

Pasta in a quaint, charming, and buzzy spot.

Ai Tre Scalini

Classic Italian dishes in a cozy setting.

Pro Loco Pinciano

Casual spot for wood fired pizzas.

Il Gocchetto

Excellent wine bar full of locals.

Roscioli

Casual, but romantic venue set inside a wine and meat cellar. Getting a table can be difficult. Books up a month in advance.

Seu Pizza

Eat award-winning pies among a hip crowd.

Ristorante Il Piccolo Mondo

Upmarket eatery near Via Veneto and Borghese.

Osteria Margutta ✨

A fashionable if not ornate cafe on the hidden and elegant Via Margutta.

53 Untitled

Roman-style “tapas” alongside natural wines & beers.

Dai Mieì

Serving classic Italian comfort foods.

Trapizzino

A trendy, fun venue in Trastevere.

MANGIO

Family owned spot serving Southern Italian cuisine in the Pigneto neighborhood just East of town.

CiPASSO

Refined, creative plates in a contemporary bistro.

La Taverna dei Quaranta

A hidden favorite of Food & Wine Mag near Colosseo.

L'Archetto ✨

A restaurant of spaghetti near Trevi. I love their lemon with truffle pasta. Ratings have slipped recently.

ROME

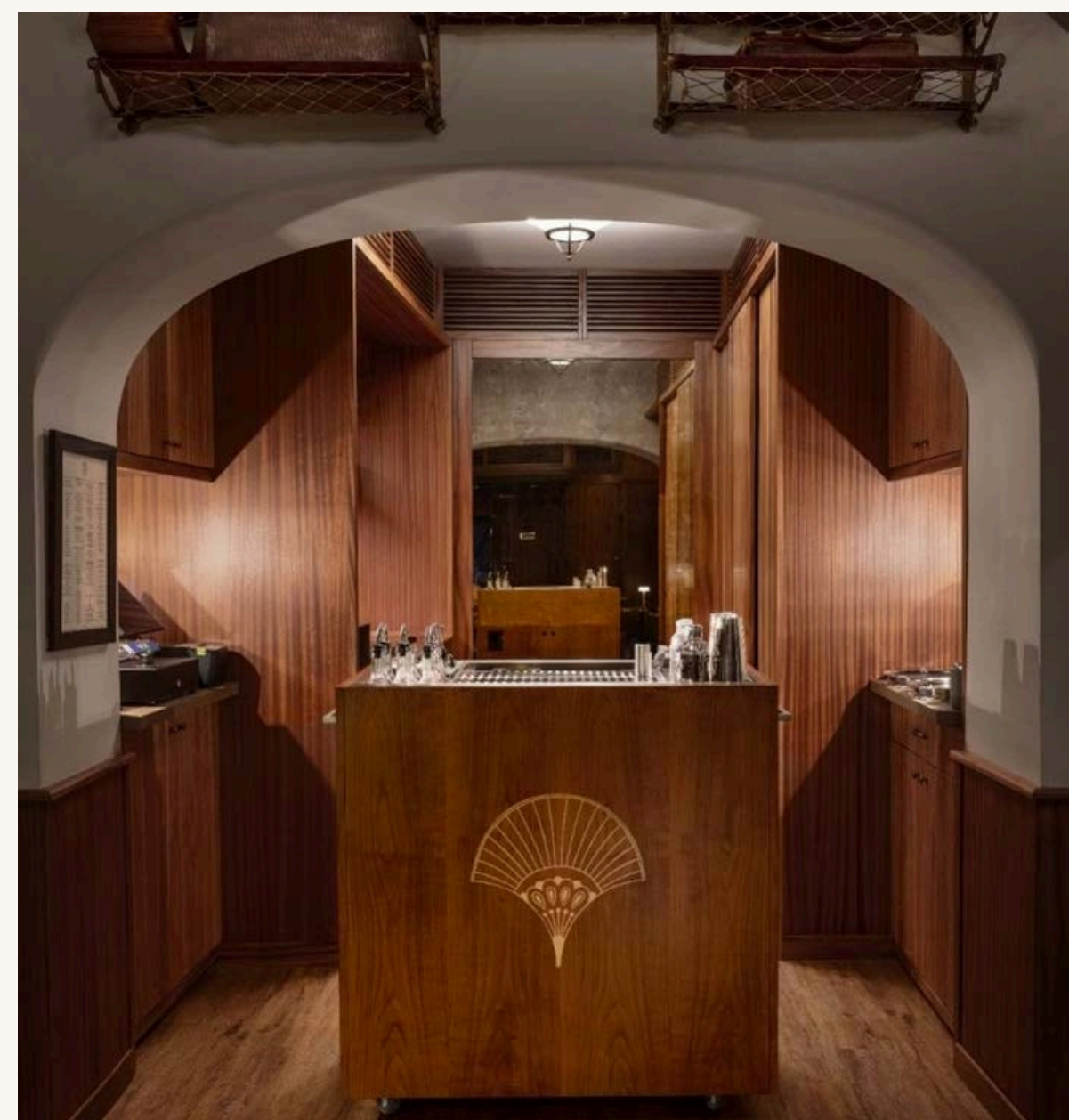
EAT



Hotel Eden's La Terrazza



Otaleg Gelato



Jerry Thomas Bar



Freni e Frizioni

COFFEE AND SNACKS

Barnum Cafe

Fantastic for breakfast.

Bar del Cappucino

A spot for deli snacks and coffee.

Forno Campo de 'Fiori

Perfect for a grab and go meal like foccacia sandwiches.

Faro

Breakfast or brunch in the new wave cafe.

Suppli

THE place to go for the famous roman snack, Suppli, a smaller version of an arancini. Plus pizza.

GELATO

Gelateria della Palma

Some say this is the best gelato in Rome.
Other Gelato go-tos: Fatamorgana, Günther, Frigidarium, Otaleg

SIP - COCKTAILS & WINE

Hotel Eden ✨

Rooftop bar and restaurant with incredible views in one of Rome's most elegant hotels.

Freni e Frizioni

Trendy and cool LGBTQ-friendly in Trastevere.

Magnebevo & Cargo

Two cool, gay-friendly cocktail bars in Pigneto.

Cielo

Rooftop bar with views and cool atmosphere in the Hotel de la Ville.

Artisan Club

Grunge craft brewery with light bites.

Jerry Thomas Bar Room

Orient Express-themed speakeasy. Be sure to secure an online reservation before ringing the bell at number 10 for this ultra cool cocktail bar.

Il Vinaietto

The tiniest of old wine bars with a long history.

The Court

Questionably touristy, but a bar and terrace offering a direct view of the Colosseum.

ROME



All'Oro



La Pergola

EAT

UPSCALE CELEBRATION PLACES

La Pergola at the Waldorf

A 3 star Michelin since 2005, the only one in Rome, one of 14 in Italy. The wine list is remarkable (70k bottles), but apparently so is the water and coffee service! It offers one of the most incredible, celebration-worthy tasting menus in the country, and “views that only are rivaled by private helicopters.” 10 courses, 350 eur.

Ristorante All'Oro

Michelin starred since 2010, featuring Piedmonte and Tuscan cuisine on the Piazza del Popolo.

Le Jardin

In the lush garden of the glam Hotel de Russie, this upscale cafe is great for lunch and does have a dress code forbidding sportswear.

Retrobottega

Ultra-modern space and food feels more art than restaurant. Michelin-recommended and on the World's 50 Best list. Vegetarian-friendly. There's only 2 communal tables or the 6-seat chef's counter.

ORMA

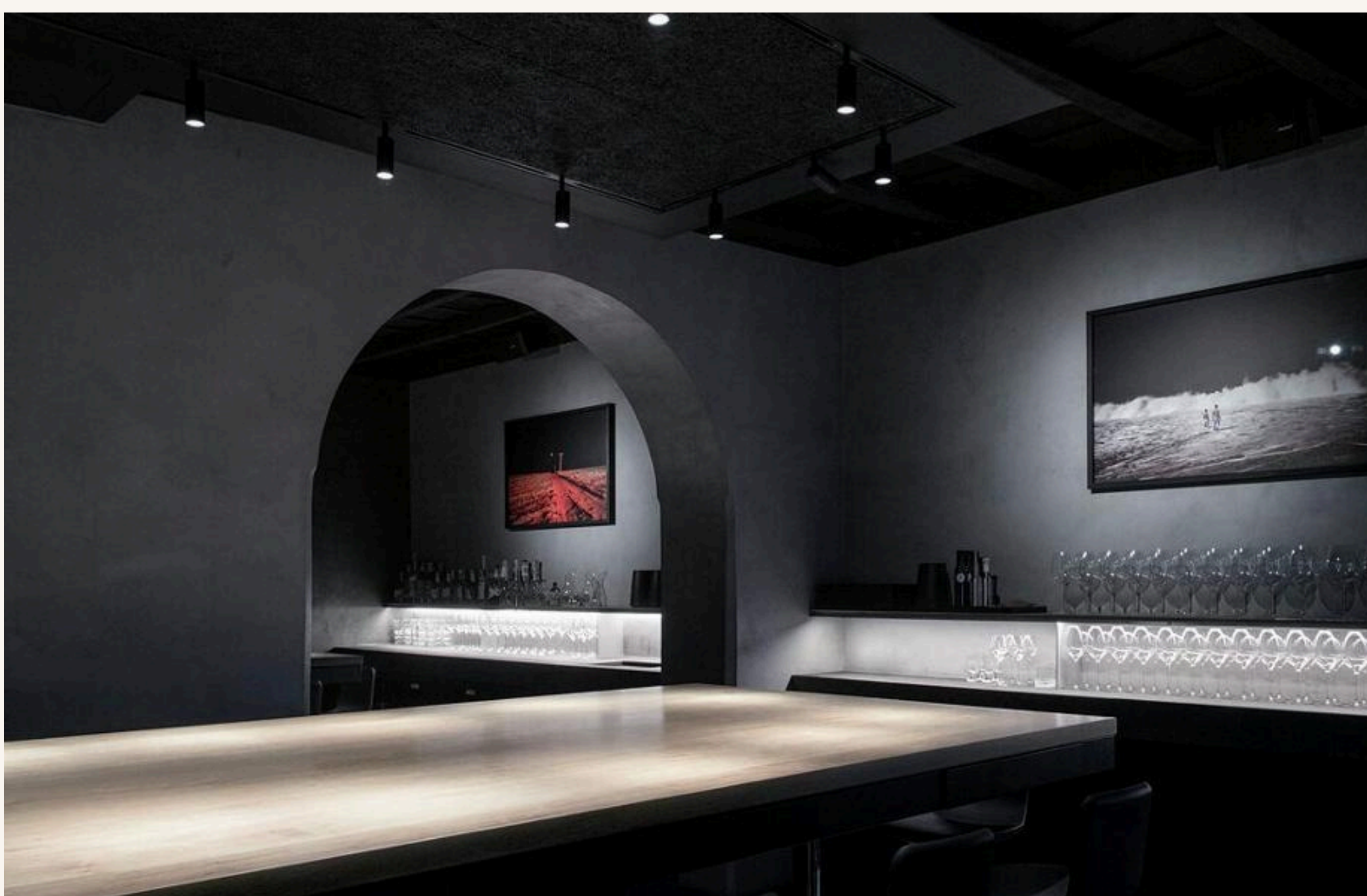
Contemporary and minimalist one-star Michelin with a focus on Lazio cuisine (the Roman state), and a Colombian accent. Well-considered wine list and alfresco terrace.

INEO

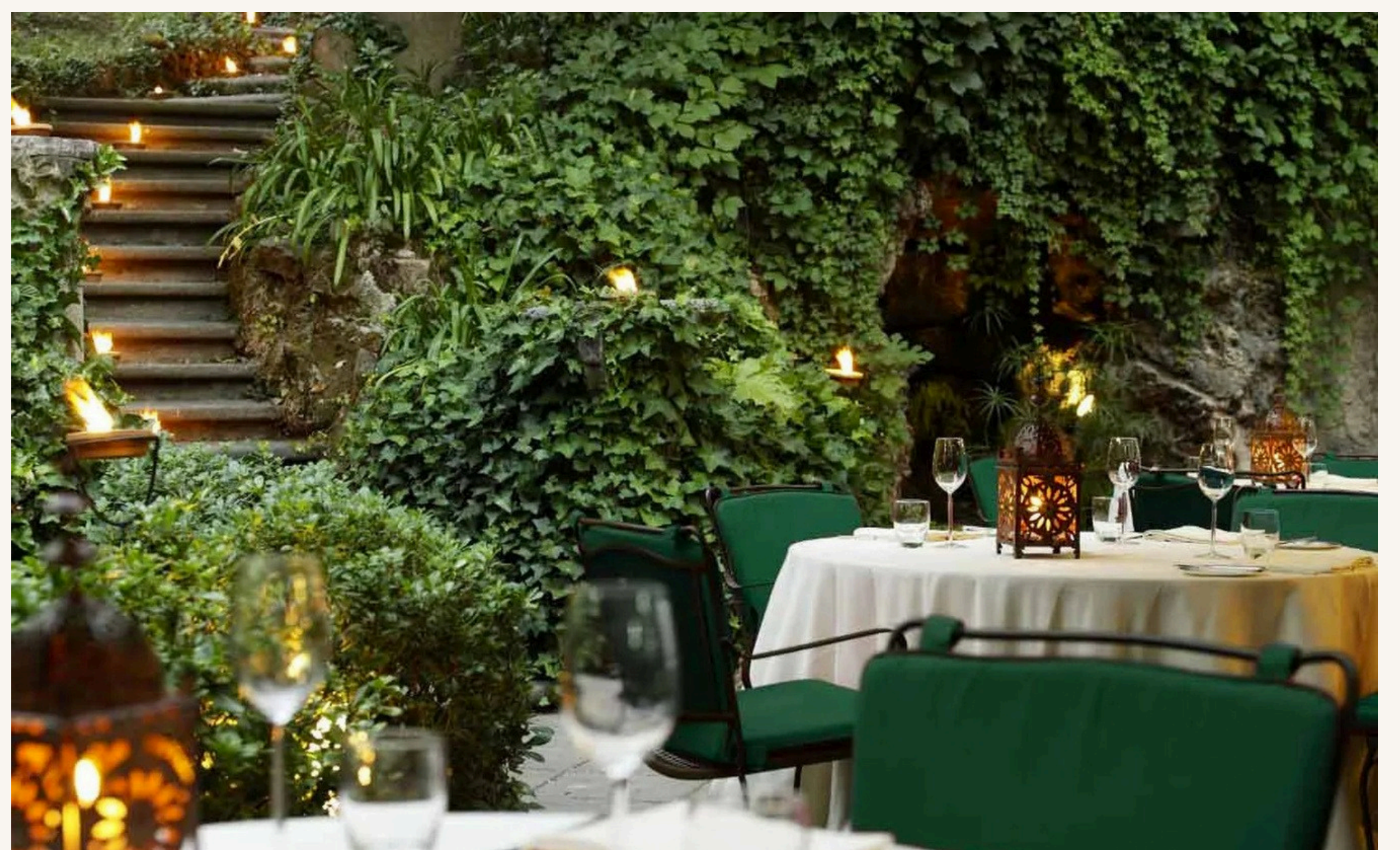
The signature restaurant inside the new Anantara Hotel, this classy space recently won accolades for its bread service.

Per Me

In a side alley just off the beaten path of the city center, this quaint Michelin star is seafood focused, with 3 tasting menus.



Retrobottega



Le Jardin

A full-page background image featuring a classical marble sculpture. The sculpture depicts two figures: a male figure in the foreground, muscular and nude, holding a large, dense bouquet of flowers; and a female figure behind him, also nude, with her arms raised in a graceful pose. The background is an ornate, gilded interior with intricate carvings and a large, arched doorway. The text "HAPPY TRAVELS!" is centered over the sculpture in a white, sans-serif font.

HAPPY TRAVELS!

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