



Ancient Rome

Art & architecture of the classical world

16–21 September 2024 (MK 427)

6 days • £2,730

Lecturer: Dr Mark Grahame

A comprehensive exploration of Rome's ancient remains, in situ and in museums.

Also includes visits outside Rome: Ostia, the well-preserved ancient port of Rome, and Tivoli, for Hadrian's enormous villa complex.

Major monuments as well as daily details.

Option to combine this tour with *Pompeii & Herculaneum*, 23–28 September 2024.

When the Aurelian walls were built around Rome in the third century ad, the area enclosed was about fifty times that of Londinium and the present-day City of London. Rome's population at that time was around a million, a figure not surpassed by any city in the world until the nineteenth century (by which time the world's population had increased tenfold).

Such was the scale of ancient Rome – formidable to any modern city-dweller with a little historical imagination; awesome, incredible even, to most citizens and subjects of the Empire. The size was appropriate for the capital of an empire which stretched from Upper Egypt to the Cairngorms, and from Atlantic Africa to Babylon, but the impedimenta of imperial administration were not the sole determinants of its size and status. As a kernel from which the Empire grew, and protagonist in myth and history, it was a spiritual home for every Roman citizen, and the fount of civilisation.

Of course, decline and fall ensued. Rome was relieved of responsibility for half the Empire when Constantinople was founded; it lost its capitular status first to Milan and then to Ravenna; it was sacked by the Goths in ad 410. At one point during the Middle Ages the population shrunk to a hundredth of its ancient peak. As late as the nineteenth century the Forum was known as the Campo Vacchino because cows grazed among the ruins.

After more than a millennium of destruction it is surprising that so much remains. Again, the sheer scale impresses the observer, but so also does the extraordinarily high level of skill in art, craft and construction, and the sophistication of a society which produced such accomplishments. This tour will look at the visible remains of ancient Rome and bring them alive by placing them in the context



The Roman Forum.

of the tumultuous history and of everyday life, which reached peaks of refinement and ease while never banishing the lewd, violent and squalid.

Itinerary

Day 1. Fly at c. 12.00pm from London Heathrow to Rome (British Airways), where all five nights are spent.

Day 2. Visit the Colosseum, the largest of ancient amphitheatres, and the Arch of Constantine, sculpturally the richest of triumphal arches. The Roman Forum – the civic, religious and social centre of Ancient Rome – has the remains of many structures famed throughout the Empire.

Day 3. A morning walk includes the Pantheon, the most complete of Roman buildings to survive, and Ara Pacis, Augustus' monumental altar of peace. Visit the church of Santa Maria degli Angeli, built on the site of the Baths of Diocletian. Palazzo Massimo, home to the majority of the National Roman Museum's collection, contains wonderful Roman frescoes and stuccoes.

Day 4. Tivoli, Rome. Drive to Tivoli for Hadrian's Villa, extraordinarily lavish and designed by the emperor himself, drawing inspiration from the sites he saw during

his travels. Return to Rome to the Baths of Caracalla, the best preserved of the several such complexes that emperors constructed in the capital for general enjoyment.

Day 5. In the morning, visit Trajan's Markets, remarkably complete and evocative, including Trajan's Column. Continue on foot to see the Fori Imperiali and the Theatre of Marcellus. The Capitoline Museums have some of the best ancient sculpture in Rome and provide access to the administrative heart of Republican Rome. Some free time.

Day 6. Rome, Ostia. Discover Monte Testaccio, a hill formed entirely of fragments of broken amphorae. Drive to Ostia, the ancient port of Rome at the mouth of the Tiber. Silt led to its decline and abandonment. In the preservation of everyday details it is comparable to Pompeii – though without the crowds. Fly from Rome Fiumicino to London Heathrow, arriving at c. 7.45pm.

Lecturer

Dr Mark Grahame. Archaeologist, lecturer and Member of the Chartered Institute of Archaeologists (MCIfA). He obtained his PhD from Southampton University and his

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thesis on the spatial layouts of the houses of Roman Pompeii was published as a British Archaeological Report and a series of journal articles. He has coordinated an adult education programme in archaeology at the University of Southampton (2002–2011) and has taught courses on the archaeology and history of the Roman Empire for Cambridge and Oxford Universities' Institutes of Continuing Education. He is currently the director of the heritage consultancy, M-Arc Heritage Ltd., a company which he founded in 2018.

Practicalities

Price, per person. Two sharing: £2,730 or £2,530 without flights. **Single occupancy:** £3,240 or £3,040 without flights.

Included: flights (Euro Traveller) with British Airways (Airbus 319 and 320); travel by private minibus; hotel accommodation; breakfasts; 2 lunches and 3 dinners with wine, water, coffee; all admissions; all tips for waiters, drivers and guides; all taxes; the services of the lecturer.

Accommodation. Hotel Donna Camilla Savelli (vretreats.com/donna-camilla-savelli): 4-star hotel excellently located on Via Garibaldi. *Single rooms are doubles for sole use.*

How strenuous? Unavoidably, there is a lot of walking on this tour. The historic area is vast, and vehicular access is increasingly restricted. Minibuses are used on some occasions but otherwise the city is traversed on foot. The tour should not be attempted by anyone who has difficulty with everyday walking and stair-climbing. Fitness is essential. Average distance by coach per day: 21 miles

Small group: between 10 and 22 participants.

Combine this tour with: *Pompeii & Herculaneum, 23–28 September 2024*

We are happy to advise on linking accommodation and transport.