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## DRINKING & NIGHTLIFE

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# DRINKING & NIGHTLIFE

In a city as extraordinary as Rome, you have an inordinate number of incredible settings in which to sip a Campari or sup a pint. Being drunk though, is uncool, and you're as likely to see Romans out on the lash on a Friday night as you are to see them eating pasta and salad on the same plate. It's just not the done thing. Dressing well for a wander and a gelato is much more up the Roman street. But the city retains an eternal glimmer of the *dolce vita* – beautiful people, beautifully dressed, having a beautiful time. The flip side is a surprising underground, alternative underbelly, centred on *centri sociali* (organised squats; see p227), which are grungy squatter arts centres that often have live music, and where dressed-down is the look of choice.

Up-for-it Romans tend to eat late, then drink at bars before heading off to a club at around 1am. It can be difficult to get around as some places are far-flung – despite drink-and-drive rules, all the locals drive, hence the alarming road-accident statistics.

Choose from myriad charming bars, *enoteche* (wine bars) and pubs. Bars range from spit-and-sawdust (no décor but the beer is cheap and the ice cream better) to designer places for the exquisitely turned out. The *enoteca* was where the old boys from the neighbourhood used to drink rough local wine poured straight from the barrel. Times have changed: nowadays they tend to be sophisticated, yet still atmospheric places, offering Italian and international vintages, delicious cheeses and cold cuts. Pubs are based on the Irish or British model and look almost like the real thing, but are populated by better-groomed people. They haul in the usual suspects: expats, Italians on a novelty trip and pint-hungry tourists.

When choosing your evening out, bear in mind that Romans prefer to go out on Thursday or Friday night. Saturday night sees many clubs full of teen suburbanites. Some of the more popular nightclubs have an infuriatingly whimsical door policy, and men will often find themselves turned away. At many clubs you will have to dress up to get or fit in – man or woman. Often admission is free, but drinks are expensive. Cocktails can cost from €10 to €15. Exceptions are the student clubs in San Lorenzo and the *centri sociali*.

For listings check *Trovaroma* (an insert in daily newspaper *La Repubblica*) on Thursday and *Roma C'è* on Wednesday, which both have a short English section, or the English-language *Wanted in Rome* magazine, published every second Wednesday. Also look out for the free nightlife listings monthly *Zerò* in bars and cafés. For alternative and techno events try <http://romastyle.info/>, while [www.musicaroma.it](http://www.musicaroma.it) lists concerts in Rome. To book live music tickets see the local listings publications or contact the ticketing agency *Orbis* (Map pp90–1; ☎ 06 482 74 03; Piazza dell'Esquilino 37).

Major concerts are held indoors or outdoors at the Parco della Musica (p231), with gigs as diverse as Lou Reed and the Scissor Sisters as well as plenty of world and jazz music stars. Large concerts also take place at Rome's sports stadiums, Stadio Flaminio (p240) and Stadio Olimpico (p240), which recently hosted the Rolling Stones and George Michael. For smaller venues, see the listings in this chapter.

## ANCIENT ROME

In Ancient Rome there are several places in which to drink in the fabulous views. You can't beat a cocktail as the sun goes down on the Colosseum, or a coffee overlooking Rome's rooftops.

### CAFFÈ CAPITOLINO Map p60 Café

☎ 06 691 90 564; Capitoline Museums, Piazza del Campidoglio 19; h 9am–7.30pm Tue–Sun; ☒ Piazza Venezia; a  
This amazing terrace overlooking the domes of Rome is a well-kept secret. It's hidden away behind the museum, and

accessible from the piazza (via a separate entrance behind Palazzo dei Conservatori) even if you haven't done the cultural bit inside the museums themselves.

### OPPIO CAFFÈ Map p60 Café

☎ 06 474 52 62; Via delle Terme di Tito 72; h 7.30am–2.30am; m Colosseo; a  
A glass-and-metal café-bar with bare-brick walls. Oppio has fabulous views of the Colosseum from the outside tables. It's a great place for a beer (€6 to €7 for a large one), cocktail (€7) or *aperitivo* (€10; 5pm to 10pm), and has regular live music and DJs playing lounge, jazz and house.

## DANCING IN THE STREET

From around mid-June to mid-September, most nightclubs and live-music joints close, while many move to Fregene or Ostia for a summer's dancing on the sand. *Eto* (p223) often holds its summer season on the terrace of Mussolini's Palazzo dei Congressi in EUR, which is worth experiencing. Summer is prime time for outdoor concerts, including the wonderful *Roma Incontra il Mondo* ([www.villaada.org](http://www.villaada.org)), featuring world and local music concerts in lakeside gardens, with a festival feel and alternative crowd. *Fiesta* ([www.fiesta.it](http://www.fiesta.it)) is a chaotic Latin American dance festival on the Via Appia. The area around the Isola Tiberina bursts into life every evening for the *Lungo er Tevere... Roma*, which sprouts bars (with gimmicks such as beach areas and deck chairs), stalls and an open-air cinema. The *Estate Romana* festival (see the boxed text, p235) takes place over the entire summer – it's a huge, all-encompassing collection of festivals with myriad club nights, concerts and performances.

### CAVOUR 313 Map p60 Wine Bar

☎ 06 678 54 96; Via Cavour 313; h 10am–2.30pm & 7.30pm–12.30am Mon–Sat, 7.30pm–12.30am Sun; m Cavour; a

This is one of Rome's oldest wine bars. Sink into its publike cosiness and choose from a list of about 1200 labels, including Italian wines and notable Californian and Australian vintages. There's also a food menu featuring a superb cheeseboard.

## CENTRO STORICO

The *centro storico* (historic centre) is home to a couple of nightlife centres: the area around Piazza Navona, with a number of elegant bars and clubs catering to the beautiful, rich and stylish (and sometimes all three); and the rowdier area around Campo de' Fiori, where the drinking is heavier – this is where people tend to congregate after football games. The *centro storico* also harbours Rome's best cafés.

## PANTHEON & AROUND

### DIVINUM Map pp74–5 Bar

☎ 3391636955; Piazza di Pietra 64; h 11am–1am Wed–Mon; ☒ Via del Corso

In the corner of this enchanting square, you can sit outside and overlook the worn columns of the Tempio di Adriano. During the day try the *caffè completo* (€3/1 seated/ at the bar) – it's served with cream in a cup lined with chocolate. At night the tables are white draped and candlelit, and it's more of an eatery (pasta, salads etc) but still good for a drink.

### LE COPPELLE Map pp74–5 Bar

☎ 06 683 24 10; Piazza del Coppelle 53; h 6pm–2am Mon–Sat; ☒ or j Largo di Torre Argentina; a  
Strike a pose at Le Coppelle and partake in some 21st-century *dolce vita*. The recently

refurbished bar has partially taken over the pretty piazza as its salon, with leopard-skin chairs and lipstick-red sofas on which to recline, watch the beautiful and the damned, and indulge in a cocktail (€10) or two.

### SALOTTO 42 Map pp74–5 Bar

☎ 06 678 58 04; Piazza di Pietra 42; h 4pm–2am Tue–Sat, 4pm–midnight Sun; ☒ Via del Corso; a

Slinky and quietly fashionable on this extraordinary piazza, this bar is as close as you'll get to a sitting-room experience in the city centre. It's run by a glamorous Italian-Swedish couple and features over-size flock wallpaper, armchairs and soft sofas, coffee-table books lining the walls and an aquarium on TV. *Aperitivo* (from 7pm to 9pm) is mainly Swedish.

### LA TAZZA D'ORO Map pp74–5 Café

☎ 06 679 27 68; Via degli Orfani 84–86; h 8am–8pm Mon–Sat; ☒ Via del Corso

A busy, stand-up bar with burnished fittings dating from the 1940s and some of the best coffee in the capital, which means it's spectacularly good. A speciality is the *granita di caffè*, a crushed-ice, sugared coffee served with a generous dollop of cream top and bottom. If you just want cream on either the top/bottom, ask for *solo sopra/sotto*.

### MISCELLANEA Map pp74–5 Pub

Via delle Paste 110a; h 11am–3am; ☒ Via del Corso

Subtitled the 'international students' pub' this is a spartan place. An American-student magnet, it's tucked down a cobbled alley near the Pantheon, and has spindly tables and chairs outside a pub-bar interior. A *birra media* (large beer) costs €3.50/€5.00 before/ after 4pm.

**TRINITY COLLEGE** *Map pp74–5* **Pub**  
 % 06 678 64 72; Via del Collegio Romano 6;  
 h noon–3am; g Via del Corso; a  
 A historic city-centre pub, Trinity College is a big booming place just off Via del Corso. Spread over two floors, it attracts a cosmopolitan crowd up for a good time. It gets packed to overflowing at weekends, when men might find it difficult to get past the heavies on the door.

## PIAZZA NAVONA & AROUND

**ANIMA** *Map pp74–5* **Bar**  
 % 06 688 92 806; Via Santa Maria dell'Anima 57; h 7pm–4am Tue–Sun; g Corso Vittorio Emanuele II; a  
 The interior is overdone Gothic-Hawaiian, the music high-energy house and hip-hop. It gets busy at this fashionable, fussily dressed-up bar, and there are burly bouncers on the door, but no admission charge. The cocktails are great (€10) and the drinkers are young, good-looking and loving it. Come early for drinks or drop by late for a dance.

**BAR DEL FICO** *Map pp74–5* **Bar**  
 % 06 686 52 05; Piazza del Fico 26; h 8am–2am Mon–Sat; g Corso Vittorio Emanuele II  
 At the time of writing Bar del Fico was undergoing some works to shore up its façade. By the time you read this, fingers crossed, this long-standing favourite of the capital's bohemians will have reopened and you can return to while away days and nights at its fig-tree-shaded tables. The elderly chess players never left: they carried on their games in the cobbled street beside the building site.

**BAR DELLA PACE** *Map pp74–5* **Bar**  
 % 06 686 12 16; Via della Pace 5;  
 h 9am–2am Tue–Sun, 4pm–2am Mon;  
 g Corso Vittorio Emanuele II; a  
 Ivy cascades down the façade of this perennially fashionable Art Nouveau café, whose outside tables are an ideal setting for posing and watching the world wander past in summer, and gilt and wood interior perfect for a leisurely winter nightcap.

**BARONATO QUATTRO BELLEZZE** **Bar**  
*Map pp74–5*  
 % 06 687 28 65; Via di Panico 23; h 8pm–2am Tue–Sun; g Corso Vittorio Emanuele II  
 Ageing Tunisian owner Antonio Loiacono, aka Dominot, dresses in drag and sings Piaf

every Thursday night at this, his eccentric bar. A glittering, theatrical shoebox of a place, where you're bound to meet some characters. Book for the Piaf show.

**BLOOM** *Map pp74–5* **Bar**  
 % 06 688 02 029; Via del Teatro Pace 29–30;  
 h varies but usually 8.30pm–2am Mon, Tue & Thu–Sat Sep–Jun; g Corso Vittorio Emanuele II; a  
 In a converted 14th-century chapel, Bloom is closely related in style to nearby club La Maison, hosting a crowd that's younger but just as gorgeous. The steel bar, 21st-century Art Deco, Philippe Starck lighting and a menu of Italian–Asian fusion food all add to the ambience of city-centre swank. It turns into a disco at weekends. Dress the part unless you want to stick out like a bad haircut.

**CRUDO** *Map pp74–5* **Bar**  
 % 06 683 89 89; Via degli Specchi 6; h Tue–Sun;  
 g Corso Vittorio Emanuele II; a  
 Crudo is an easy-going yet uberchic bar and restaurant. It's a great place for a designer drink, whether it's a mojito or a vegetable shake. The interior is arty and contemporary, with streaky walls and flickering projections, and it's almost too cool for school. That goes for the easy-on-the-eye patrons and the food because everything served here is raw, from sushi to sashimi to salami.

**FLUID** *Map pp74–5* **Bar**  
 % 06 683 23 61; Via del Governo Vecchio 46;  
 h 6pm–2am; g Corso del Rinascimento; a  
 A bit too try-hard, this is nonetheless popular and worth a try if you like a designer setting as a backdrop for a drink. Punters sit on illuminated ice-cube-style seating and the interior design is best described as cosmic-cave chic. Most clientele think they're too cool to look even vaguely interested in what they are doing.

**SOCIÉTÉ LUTÈCE** *Map pp74–5* **Bar**  
 % 06 683 01472; Piazza di Montevecchio 17;  
 h 6.30pm–2am Tue–Sat; g Corso Vittorio Emanuele II; a  
 A group of Turin trendsters opened Sociét  Lut ce and it's listed among Rome's hippest bars – boho, cool and art-school rather than dressed-up and glitzy – like their other venture in Trastevere, *Freni e Frizioni* (p225). The music's genuinely funky, *aperitivo* tasty, and the effortlessly good-looking crowds spill out onto the piazza outside.

## TOUR DE ROME

*Fabrizio Pompeo was born in Rome and has lived here for 34 years – spending another nine years abroad. His company, Tour de Force, promotes music concerts in Rome.*

### What is the music scene like in Rome?

As Rome is Italy's biggest city, most of the main acts play here during their tours. The summer is liveliest as there are lots of open-air venues. In the last decade Rome has established her position in the music market, mostly for big summer events. The council has invested a lot, allowing some very special places to be used for free concerts (such as outside the Colosseo and in Circo Massimo). Unfortunately the investment has provided huge media exposure, but hasn't addressed the historic lack of venues. Rome deserves a wider range of venues. Often we can't satisfy the requests of our clients or the audience.

### Which is Rome's best venue?

The Circolo degli Artisti is a real rock club. I love it as they started at the same time I started promoting shows here. Customers like it as a window to the alternative scene. And the garden is a really good place to talk to people after a great concert.

I like working at the Parco della Musica because it is so easy to sell out shows. People go there because they know it's comfortable, easy to reach, easy to park and so on. All the concerts they host seem to be huge events. It's affected the music scene a lot. But nowadays the Musica per Roma Foundation buys shows directly and so has become a direct competitor, with a lot of public funds and supported by the town council!

### What would you recommend a visitor do on a night out?

I love to wander around the streets of Rome. Trastevere, Campo de' Fiori, Monti, the Ghetto are just unique. They're all so different. It's one thing is to walk around in the morning, and another at night. Different worlds. Go to a central district and enjoy an aperitif on a bar terrace; afterwards walk into a trattoria for a great dinner; and finish walking from one bar to another.

**STARDUST** *Map pp74–5* **Bar**

% 06 686 89 86; Via Santa Maria dell'Anima 52;  
 h 8pm–2am Mon–Sat; g Corso del Rinascimento  
 Stardust was a Trastevere institution, a tiny low-lit bar with a sultry atmosphere, boho crowd, and occasional live music. Atmosphere and all, it's been packed up and shifted to just off Piazza Navona. The new Stardust is larger but remains intimate, with a series of red-and-black rooms decorated by blown-up works of Iranian photographer Arash. Punters hang out on the cobbled street, while music veers from Velvet Underground to Vivaldi. Charismatic owner Anna hopes that live jazz gigs will restart once soundproofing has been completed.

**CAFF  SANT'EUSTACHIO** *Map pp74–5* **Caf **

% 06 686 13 09; Piazza Sant'Eustachio 82;  
 h 8.30am–1am; g Corso del Rinascimento  
 A small stand-up place with some of Rome's best coffee, this is always three deep at the bar. The coffee is created through a special process – note how the *barristi* (coffee-makers) turn away to complete the secret recipe. Served sugared

with a layer of froth, it's superbly smooth and guaranteed to put some zing into your sightseeing. Specify if you want it *amaro* (bitter) or *poco zucchero* (with a little sugar).

**CHIOSTRO DEL BRAMANTE CAFF ** **Caf **  
*Map pp74–5*

% 06 688 09 035, ext 26; Via della Pace;  
 h 10am–7.30pm; g Corso del Rinascimento  
 A well-kept secret: you can have a drink or creamy cappuccino, and snack (or brunch on weekends between 10am and 3pm) on salads and so on (€8 to €12) in the Renaissance splendour of Bramante's cloister, which often hosts dramatically contemporary art installations. There's also wi-fi access.

**DA VEZIO** *Map pp74–5* **Caf **

% 06 683 29 51; Via Tor di Nona 37;  
 h 7am–7pm Mon–Sat; g Corso del Rinascimento  
 You might find conversation falters as you enter this flag-festooned, tiny coffee bar, but it's worth a look out of curiosity. Vezio Bagazzini has turned it into a crammed-full shrine to Communism – inside all things red line the walls and ceiling. Don't wear your Forza Italia T-shirt.

## GRAN CAFFÈ LA CAFFETTIERA

Map pp74-5

Café

☎ 06 679 81 47; Piazza di Pietra 65; h 7.30am-9pm Mon-Sat; g Via del Corso; a This stately café is a throwback to smarter days and is famous for its Neapolitan cakes – try the *babà* (sponge cake soaked in rum) for something special, and the *rustici* (cheese-and-tomato-filled pastry puff) for something savoury. Sit in the elegant Art Deco interior or outside and watch life on the enchanting square, overlooked by the ancient Tempio di Adriano.

## ETABLÌ

Map pp74-5

Café-Bar

☎ 06 687 14 99; Vicolo delle Vacche; h 10am-2am; g Corso del Rinascimento; a Chilean-Italian brothers Massimo and Alessandro Aureli are the smiling hosts of this informal *enoteca*-lounge-bar-café restaurant in a 16th-century building. A new address on the itinerary of Rome's beautiful people, it's named after the antique workbenches that the brothers brought back from Provence alongside the many other antique furnishings. Roman lovelies float in and out to have a drink or coffee, read the paper, and indulge in *aperitivo* or the restaurant's *cucina creativa* (creative cuisine).

## LA MAISON

Map pp74-5

Club

☎ 06 683 33 12; Vicolo dei Granari 4; h 11.30pm-4am Tue-Sun Sep-May, Fri & Sat Jun-Aug; g Corso Vittorio Emanuele II; a Velvet banquettes, crystal chandeliers and a sleek resin-and-steel bar provide the

sexy backdrop for a good-looking, flirty, 30-something crowd. Showy it might be, but it's also genuinely fun, with good music. Entrance is free if you can get past the door police, but drinks are from €10 to €15 a throw. There's no-one there before 2am, but, as if by magic, it's chock-a-block at 2.05.

## SUPPERCLUB

Map pp74-5

Club

☎ 06 688 07 207; Via de' Nari 14; h 8pm-2am Mon-Sat; g or j Largo di Torre Argentina; a Is it a bar? Is it a restaurant? Is it a cabaret joint? No, it's the Supperclub! Resembling its cousin in Amsterdam, but with less reefer, here you recline on white divans, eat a violin-serenaded dinner, and then strut your designer-clad stuff in the disco.

## MODÒ

Map pp74-5

Live Music

☎ 06 687 90 75; Vicolo del Fico 3; h 7.30pm-2am Tue-Sun Oct-May; g Corso Vittorio Emanuele II; a A black-and-white confection: consider wearing black to fit in. This long narrow bar is a sophisticated, intimate venue, with live music (mainly jazz) followed by DJ sets. It's gay-friendly for a Sunday *aperitivo*.

## BEVITORIA NAVONA

Map pp74-5

Wine Bar

☎ 06 688 01 022; Piazza Navona 72; h 10am-midnight, 10am-1am Jun-Sep; g Corso del Rinascimento No wine bar on Piazza Navona is ever going to be cheap and off the beaten track, but this is one of the better places. Drink at the bar (€4 for a glass of Frascati Superiore) or sit outside and pay for waiter service. If you

get the chance check out the remains of Domitian's stadium in the cellar.

## ENOTECA PICCOLA

Map pp74-5

Wine Bar

☎ 06 688 01 746; Via del Governo Vecchio 75; h noon-3.30pm & 7pm-1am Tue-Sun; g Corso Vittorio Emanuele II Despite being in one of Rome's most touristy areas, this wine bar retains an old-fashioned, unaffected feel. A local said dismissively, 'the fridge is small', but the selection of Italian wines is good if limited, and well accompanied by cold cuts and cheeses.

## CAMPO DE' FIORI & AROUND

FEMME

Map pp74-5

Bar

☎ 06 686 48 62; Via del Pellegrino 14; h 6pm-2am mid-Sep-Jun; g Corso Vittorio Emanuele II; a A hang-out just off Campo de' Fiori, Femme has all-women DJs, and a hip bar interior: you sit on silver cubes, leaning against wavy modernist banquettes.

## GLOSS

Map pp74-5

Bar

☎ 3358179090; Via del Monte della Farina 43; h 7pm-2am Tue-Sat, 6.30-10.30pm Mon Sep-Jun; g Corso Vittorio Emanuele II; a With rough red walls, modern art and regular DJ and live music sets – mostly house and electrofunk – Gloss is appealingly laid-back, attracting a lively, but not too intimidatingly dressed-up crowd.

## CAFFÈ FARNESE

Map pp74-5

Café

☎ 06 688 02 125; Via dei Baullari 106; h 7am-2am; g Corso Vittorio Emanuele II We're with Goethe, who thought Piazza Farnese one of the world's most beautiful squares. Judge for yourself from the vantage of this unassuming café. On a street between Campo de' Fiori and Piazza Farnese, it's ideally placed for whiling away the early afternoon hours. Try the *caffè alla casa* (house coffee) – made to a secret recipe, it resonates with lemon and other delicious flavours.

## IL GOCCETTO

Map pp74-5

Wine Bar

☎ 06 686 42 68; Via dei Banchi Vecchi 14; h 11am-2pm & 4-10pm Mon-Sat; g Corso Vittorio Emanuele II An old-school *enoteca* with a dark interior, few tables, and bottles lining the wooden walls, Il Gocetto is a genuine Roman wine

bar. Join the regulars at the bar for a glass or order a bottle from the selection of international and Italian vintages.

## IL NOLANO

Map pp74-5

Wine Bar

☎ 06 687 93 44; Campo de' Fiori 11; h 6pm-2am Tue-Sat, noon-2am Sun; g Corso Vittorio Emanuele II Taking its name from Giordano Bruno da Nola, the hooded monk-Obiwan lookalike in the centre of the *campo* (field), Il Nolano is a refined little arty wine bar with peeling paint, rickety tables and old wooden cinema seats. It's often used for art exhibitions and book presentations.

## L'ANGOLO DIVINO

Map pp74-5

Wine Bar

☎ 06 686 44 13; Via dei Balestrari 12; h 10am-2.30pm & 5pm-2am Mon-Sat; g Corso Vittorio Emanuele II; a A hop and a skip from the busy *campo*, this corner *vini e olio* shop (wine and oil cellar) is an oasis of genteel calm, with an ample wine list and a select menu (dishes €7.50 to €13.50). A charming place with wooden beams and terracotta floors, and on the go since 1946, it's great for a quiet glass of wine, a nibble of cheese or a light meal.

## TAVERNA DEL CAMPO

Map pp74-5

Wine Bar

☎ 06 687 44 02; Campo de' Fiori 16; h 8am-3am Tue-Sun; g Corso Vittorio Emanuele II A breakfast bar for the *campo's* market traders, the Taverna metamorphoses into a hip drinking haunt during the day, almost merging with Vineria next door. Grab an outside table to watch the human traffic.

## VINERIA REGGIO

Map pp74-5

Wine Bar

☎ 06 688 03 268; Campo de' Fiori 15; h 8.30am-2am; g Corso Vittorio Emanuele II; a The coolest bar on the *campo*, this has a small, bottle-lined, cosy interior and outside tables as well, and attracts *fighi* (cool) Romans like bees to a honey pot. A *birra media* costs €4.50.

## JEWISH GHETTO

Map pp74-5

Bar

☎ 06 689 22 99; Piazza Mattei 9; h 3pm-2am; g Via Arenula; a VIPs, theatre darlings and the charming come to sip cocktails amid this exuberant and eccentric baroque ensemble of oriental

## HOW TO DO COFFEE

To do as the Romans do, you have to be precise about your coffee needs. For an espresso (a small amount of very strong black coffee), ask for *un caffè*; if you want it with a drop of hot/cold milk, order *un caffè macchiato* ('stained' coffee) *caldo/freddo*. Long black coffee (as in a weaker, watered-down version) is known as *caffè lungo* (an espresso with more water) or *caffè all'americana* (a filter coffee). If you fancy a coffee but one more shot will catapult you through the ceiling, you can drink *orzo*, made from roasted barley but served like coffee.

Then, of course, there's the cappuccino (coffee with frothy milk, served warm rather than hot as otherwise it impairs the flavour). If you want it without froth, ask for a *cappuccino senza schiuma*; if you want it hot, ask for it *ben caldo*. Italians generally drink cappuccino only during the morning and never after meals; to order it after 11am would be, well, foreign. In summer *cappuccino freddo* (iced coffee with milk, usually already sugared), a *caffè freddo* (iced espresso), or *granita di caffè* (frozen coffee, usually with cream) top the charts. A *caffè latte* is a milkier version of the cappuccino with less froth and *latte macchiato* is even milkier (warmed milk stained with a spot of coffee). A *caffè corretto* is an espresso 'corrected' with a dash of grappa or something similarly strong.

There are two ways to drink coffee in a Roman bar-café: you can either take it standing up at the bar, in which case pay first at the till and then, with your receipt, order at the counter; or you can sit down at a table and enjoy waiter service. In the latter case you'll pay up to double what you'd pay at the bar.



furniture, velvet fabrics and Venetian chandeliers; the soundtrack is loungey and jazzy and the mood relaxing and chatty.

## RIALTOSANTAMBROGIO

Map pp74–5

Live Music

% 06 68133 640; www.rialtosantambrogio.org; Via Sant'Ambrogio 4; h various Sep–mid-Jun;

g Via Arenala

You might feel that you've stumbled into an art school, but this ancient courtyard-centred building is the most central *centro sociale*. It's open to all and is a radical melting pot, with gigs, club nights (a monthly funk night among others), exhibitions and art-house cinema.

## VIA DEL CORSO & AROUND

CIAMPINI Map pp74–5

Café

Piazza di San Lorenzo in Lucina; h 7.30am–9pm; g Via del Corso

The graceful, traffic-free square of San Lorenzo is an ideal stop for an alfresco coffee, which you'll drink among the well-heeled folk of the neighbourhood. Bring your big sunglasses and little dog. Sitting outside is pricey (cappuccinos €5), so remember it's an investment and settle.

## ESQUILINO, QUIRINALE & PIAZZA DI SPAGNA

The Monti area, north of the Colosseum, is also splendid for after-dark drinks, with lots of charming candlelit dives that are good if

you want a proper chat. If you're wanting to keep it real, head down to San Lorenzo district, which is close to Termini, the student quarter and home of grungy pubs, bars, clubs and some surprising gems.

## ESQUILINO & MONTI

BOHEMIEN Map pp90–1

Bar

% 328 173 01 58; Via degli Zingari 36; h 10am–2pm & 5pm–2am Tue–Sun; m Cavour This elegant little bar feels like something you might stumble on in Left-Bank Paris: small, with mismatched chairs and tables and an eclectic, fittingly boho crowd drinking wine by the glass or cups of tea. It's gay but attracts all types.

## ANTICO CAFFÉ SANTAMARIA

Map pp90–1

Café

% 06 446 58 63; Piazza Santa Maria Maggiore 7a; h 8am–midnight; m Vittorio Emanuele Despite the name, this is notably new: a smart chrome-and-glass café, with a fantastic position opposite Santa Maria Maggiore. You can sit face to face with the magnificent church façade at sun-shaded outside tables, which is pleasant despite the busy junction.

## LA BOTTEGA DEL CAFFÉ

Map pp90–1

Café

% 06 481 58 71; Piazza Madonna dei Monti 5; h 8am–2am; m Cavour Ideal for whiling away a morning, lunch, afternoon or evening, this appealing café-bar has greenery-screened tables out on the captivatingly pretty Piazza Madonna dei

Monti with its fountain. Exchange glances with interesting, artsy types, foreign and local. A *birra media* costs €5.

## IL POSTO DELLE FRAGOLE

Map pp90–1

Live Music

% 06 478 80 959; Via Carlootta 51; h 8pm–2am Wed–Sun; m Vittorio Emanuele; a

For an alternative night out you can't get more offbeat than this homely Swedish *as-sociazione culturale* (cultural association). It offers an ample selection of beer and wine, a menu of Scandinavian food (including reindeer meat) and an eclectic events calendar, ranging from world music concerts to chess tournaments.

## DRUID'S DEN

Map pp90–1

Pub

% 06 488 02 58; Via San Martino ai Monti 28;

h 6pm–1.30am; m Cavour; a

An Irish nook of a pub, the Druid's Den attracts a crowd of young expats and Roman Anglophiles. It meets all your Irish pub needs: the atmosphere is convivial; the walls are wood lined; Celtic paraphernalia is everywhere; and Guinness is on tap.

## FIDDLER'S ELBOW

Map pp90–1

Pub

% 06 487 21 10; Via dell'Olmata 43;

h 5pm–1.15am; g Via Cavour; a

The granddaddy of Rome's Irish pubs, the Fiddler's Elbow sticks to the formula that has served it so well over the last 25 years or so – Guinness, darts and crisps. Providing the beer chasers are more than 180 labels of whisky and rum.

## FINNEGANS

Map pp90–1

Pub

% 06 474 70 26; Via Leonina 66; m Cavour

At first glance this seems like an Irish pub anywhere in the world, but look closer and it has some Italian twists. Many of the clientele are good-looking and there's table service. You can also order bellinis and snacks alongside the pints of Guinness. Popular with expats and young Romans, it's Irish-run and shows all the big football and rugby games.

## AL VINO AL VINO

Map pp90–1

Wine Bar

% 06 48 58 03; Via dei Serpenti 19; h 5.30pm–12.30am Sun–Thu, 5.30pm–1.30am Fri & Sat;

m Cavour; a

A studiously rustic vine-decorated place, with ceramic table tops and terracotta and ceramic floors set against large contem-

# top picks

## WINE BARS

Here's a list of some of Rome's most divine wine bars. You'll notice some of them are listed in the Eating chapter, because they're particularly good for food.

- Antica Enoteca (p220)
- Casa Bleva (p188)
- Cul de Sac (p188)
- Ferrara (at the tiny Le Mescita bar; p204)
- Il Nolano (p217)
- La Barrique (below)
- Palatium (p197)
- Trimani (p221)
- Vineria Chianti (p196)
- Vineria Reggia (p217)

porary paintings, this is an attractive spot to linger over a fine collection of wines, particularly *passiti* (sweet wines). You can accompany them with snacks, including some Sicilian dishes.

## LA BARRIQUE

Map pp90–1

Wine Bar

% 06 478 259 53; Via del Boschetto 41b;

h closed Sat lunch & Sun; m Cavour; a

A dark and cool, bottle-lined *enoteca* that on a summer's day is like balm after the heat-pounding street. La Barrique offers excellent wines – including a good list by the glass – accompanied by delicious snacks such as *bruschettine* (little bruschettas).

## PIAZZA DI SPAGNA & AROUND

LE JARDIN DU RUSSIE Map pp90–1

Bar

% 06 328 88 70; Via del Babuino 9; m Flaminio

Perhaps you can't afford to stay here but you should splash out for a drink in what is surely one of the most enchanting bars in the city. It's set in the courtyard of the *Hotel de Russie* (a favourite of visiting celebrities; p255), with terraced gardens and sun-shaded tables, and is impossibly romantic in a kind of 19th-century-traveller way.

## BABINGTON'S TEA ROOMS

Map pp90–1

Café

% 06 678 60 27; Piazza di Spagna 23;

h 9am–8.15pm Wed–Sun; m Spagna; a

More English than the English, and right by the Spanish Steps, Babington's has been

## TIME FOR WINE

There's nothing like a chilled, light white wine, washing down the pasta on a summer's day. It might be forgettable but it's sublimely refreshing. Most of the house white you'll guzzle in Rome will be from the Castelli Romani area to the southeast of Rome, centred on Frascati and Marino. It arrives by truck: robust and honest, usually mixed from Trebbiano and Malvasia grapes.

However, as Italian wine producers have raised their game to face international competition, so Lazio's wine-makers have joined the fray. New production techniques have led to a lighter, drier wine that is beginning to be taken seriously. Frascati Superiore is now an excellent tippie, Castel de Paolis' Vigna Adriana wins plaudits, while the emphatically named Est! Est!!! Est!!!!, produced north of Rome in *Montefiascone* (p271), is becoming increasingly drinkable.

Although whites dominate Lazio's production – 95% of the region's Denominazione di Origine Controllata (DOC; the second of Italy's four quality classifications) wines are white – there are a few notable reds worth dipping into. Falesco produces the excellent Montiano, blended from Merlot grapes, while Torre Ercolana from Anagni is another opulent red. To try any wines from Lazio, *Palatium* (p197) is the place.

You're not confined to local wine though, of course. Rome is packed with *enoteche* (wine bars) with knowledgeable staff, proffering wines from all over the beautiful country, as well as international labels. Some of these are also listed in the Eating and Shopping chapters.

serving Earl Grey to homesick tourists since the 19th century. You'll need the kind of budget worthy of a Grand Tour: a full high tea costs €29, but what else can you do when you have a crumpet craving?

### CAFFÈ GRECO Map pp90-1 Café

☎ 06 679 17 00; Via dei Condotti 86; h 10.30am-7pm Mon & Sun, 9am-7pm Tue-Sat; m Spagna; a Caffè Greco opened in 1760 and retains the look of a forgotten era: penguin waiters, red flock and gilt mirrors. Casanova, Goethe, Wagner, Keats, Byron, Shelley and Baudelaire were all regulars. Now it's fewer artists and lovers and more shoppers and tourists. Prices reflect this, unless you do as the locals do and have a drink standing at the bar.

### CIAMPINI 2 Map pp90-1 Café

☎ 06 78 56 78; Via della Fontanella di Borghese; h 7am-1am; m Spagna  
Hidden away a short distance from the top of the Spanish Steps, this graceful café has a garden-party vibe: it's the green wooden latticework surrounding the outside tables that does it. There are lovely views over the backstreets behind Spagna, and the ice cream is renowned (particularly the truffle).

### MUSEO ATELIER CANOVA TADOLINI Map pp90-1 Café

☎ 06 321 10 702; Via del Babuino 150a/b; h 8am-8.30pm Mon-Sat; m Spagna; a In 1818 sculptor Canova signed a contract for this studio, which agreed it would be forever preserved for sculpture. The place is still stuffed with statues, and it's a curious but unique experience to sit among the great maquettes and sup an upmarket tea or drink an *aperitivo*.

### GILDA Map pp90-1 Club

☎ 06 678 48 38; Via Mario de' Fiori 97; h 11pm-4am Tue-Sun; m Spagna; a Cue impressive displays of cleavage and silver foxes on the dance floor: Rome's partying politicians, actors and glamorous wannabes have been coming to Gilda to let their expensive hair down for decades. Named after the Rita Heyworth film, it's a dressy place where jackets are required and the music is pure pop. The glamour pusses transfer to Ostia in summer for Gilda on the Beach.

### GREGORY'S Map pp90-1 Live Music

☎ 06 679 63 86; Via Gregoriana 54d; h 8pm-3am Tue-Sun; m Barberini; a If it were a tone of voice, it'd be husky: unwind in the downstairs bar then unwind some more on squashy sofas upstairs to some slinky live jazz, with quality local performers. Gregory's is a popular hang-out for local musicians.

### ANTICA ENOTECA Map pp90-1 Wine Bar

☎ 06 679 08 96; Via della Croce 76b; h 11am-1am; m Spagna; a Local shoppers and shopkeepers pack this much-loved wine bar, full of frescoes and 19th-century fittings. Plonk yourself at the long wood-and-brass counter and take your pick from the wine list and snacks, or plunge into the back room for decent pasta or pizza.

### SHAKI Map pp90-1 Wine Bar

☎ 06 679 16 94; Via Mario de Fiori 29a; h 9am-1am; m Spagna; a Shaki is a sleek wine bar with outside tables along a cobbled street, plum in the centre of the designer shopping district. Hence it's pricey (dishes €8 to €16) for what it is, but is ideal for a flop to watch the fashion hits and misses wander past. Of the light meals, salads are the best bet, with fresh ingredients. There's another branch at *Via del Governo Vecchio 123* (*Map pp74-5*), near Piazza Navona.

## PIAZZA BARBERINI & AROUND

### L'HOTEL ALEPH Map pp90-1 Bar

☎ 06 42 29 01; Via di San Basilio 15; h 12.30-4pm & 5pm-2am; m Barberini; a The Aleph hotel, designed by Adam D Tihany, is themed heaven and hell throughout. Downstairs is the Angelo bar: if this is heaven, it has borrowed hell's clothes, suffused in sexy black and lipstick-red *agent provocateur* boudoir chic. Else try the rooftop terrace and the 7 Heaven bar with views and more conventionally sublime white sunshades. It's a place to pose and feel like you're in a photo shoot. Unless you are here on expenses, you might want to spin out your €18 cocktail.

### DONEY H CLUB Map pp90-1 Bar

☎ 06 470 82 805; Via Vittorio Veneto 141; h 8am-2am; m Barberini; a A former *dolce vita* hang-out on once-swinging Via Vittorio Veneto, the Doney is

the best place to go in search of the contemporary equivalent in this no-longer-it zone. Housed in the plush Westin Excelsior Hotel, its outdoor section is like a sitting room on the street, ideal for smoking your fat cigar, sipping a cocktail (€11) and eyeing up the other wealthy Romans, out-of-towners and tourists. Indoors features candelabras, modernist chandeliers and artistic baubles. It heats up around *apéritif* time. There's a DJ Friday and Saturday nights.

### MOMA Map pp90-1 Café

☎ 06 420 11 798; Via di San Basilio; h 7am-11pm; m Barberini  
*Molto* trendy: this café-restaurant, popular with workers from nearby offices, is a real find. There's a small stand-up café downstairs, with a nice little deck outside where you can linger longer over coffee and delicious *dolcetti*. Upstairs is a *cucina creativa* restaurant (meals €60).

## PIAZZA DELLA REPUBBLICA & AROUND

### TRIMANI Map pp90-1 Wine Bar

☎ 06 446 96 30; Via Cernaia 37b; h 11.30am-3pm & 6pm-12.30am Mon-Sat, closed Aug; m Termini; a Part of the Trimani family's wine empire (their shop just round the corner stocks about 4000 international labels) this is a great, unpretentious place. Always bustling, it's Rome's biggest wine bar and has a vast selection of Italian regional wines as well as a small food menu. Book ahead to take one of the regular wine-tasting courses.

## SAN LORENZO & BEYOND

### CLANDESTINA Map p103 Bar

☎ 06 444 04 67; Via dei Volsci 33; h 8pm-3am; g Via dei Reti; a Opposite one of Rome's historic *centri sociali*, the intimidatingly muralled No 32, this is a chic little, spartan yet stylish wine bar where San Lorenzo hipsters come to while away the night until it's club o'clock.

### ARCO DEGLI AURUNCI Map p103 Café

☎ 06 445 44 25; Via degli Aurunci 42; h 7am-2am; g Via dei Reti; a A charming café-bar on one of San Lorenzo's rare idyllic corners, here the outside

tables overlook a small piazza and a modern church. The interior is airy, with warm orange walls, brick arches and blown-up photos. It's a fabulous place for a drink (cocktail €5), *aperitivo* (7pm to 9pm; €7 to €9), or even a light meal (€5), with occasional live music.

### MAX'S BAR Map p103 Club

☎ 06 702 01 599; Via Achille Grandi 3a; admission varies; h 10.30pm-3.30am Thu-Sun; m Vittorio Emanuele  
Max's unthreatening, welcoming vibe, backed by a hip-wiggling soundtrack of commercial house, is what has endeared it to so many men for so long. An institution in gay Rome, it's favoured by the young, the old and everything in between.

### LOCANDA ATLANTIDE Map p103 Live Music

☎ 06 447 04 540; www.locandatlantide.it; Via dei Lucani 22b; h 10pm-4am Sep-mid-Jun; m Vittorio Emanuele; a You wouldn't find this unmarked, backstreet, graffiti-covered door among a string of workshops and warehouses unless you were in the know. Descend into a cavernous place with décor best described as recycled. Its lively alternative gigs are always fun and full; it's good to know that punk is not dead. Come here to tickle Rome's grungy underbelly.

### MICCA CLUB Map p103 Live Music

☎ 06 874 40 079; www.miccaclub.com; Via Pietra Micca 7a; h 10pm-2am Wed, 10pm-4am Thu-Sat, 6pm-2am Sun, closed Jun-Aug; m Vittorio Emanuele; a Pop art fills ancient cellars and brick arches change colour every few seconds at this curious underground venue. It's dedicated to the '60s but isn't a nostalgia trip, though Austin Powers types are in evidence. Expect live jazz followed by rare '60s grooves. Book online, or, if you can't make it, listen to it: Radio Città Futura broadcasts shows live.

### RIVE GAUCHE 2 Map p103 Pub

☎ 06 445 67 22; Via dei Sabelli 43; h 7pm-2am; g Via Tiburtina; a We don't know where Rive Gauche 1 is, but this weirdly named place is one of San Lorenzo's most popular pubs. Vibrant, big and noisy, it's always full of students, foreigners and assorted friends.

## SOUTHERN ROME

Get down to Testaccio at midnight, and saunter down to the end of Via Galvani, in the square mile of the mount of Testaccio, and you'll find more clubs than at a Captain Caveman fancy dress ball. They offer something for every taste, including no taste. More clubs spread out into the neighbouring gritty but trendy district of Ostiense. Celio (near Colosseo) has some charming drinking options, and there are some more clubs flung out in the suburbs.

## SAN GIOVANNI

### CIRCOLO DEGLI ARTISTI

Map pp108-9

Live Music

% 06 703 05 684; Via Casilina Vecchia 42; h 10pm-3.30am Tue-Thu, 9pm-4.30am Fri & Sat; g Via Casilina; a

For a memorable evening, head to this laid-back club in Rome's eastern suburbs. It's the venue for alternative music concerts, with recent highlights Black Rebel Motor-cycle Club and the White Stripes, but also hosts club nights, reaching a crescendo every Saturday night with Screamedelica, featuring Italy's alternative music oracle Fabio Luzietti. Friday night is Omogenic, gay night. A large garden area is ideal for a chat and a beer from the open-air bar.

## GAY & LESBIAN ROME

Rome's gay scene is out of the closet but hasn't ventured much further. Despite the efforts of the Catholic Church, homosexuality is well tolerated, but the gay scene is not a patch on that of many other international capitals. There's no openly gay part of town and only a few gay and lesbian clubs and bars, though many clubs host regular gay and lesbian nights. We've listed these throughout this chapter.

There's a Gay Pride march annually in mid-June, and the 10-week *Gay Village* ([www.gayvillage.it](http://www.gayvillage.it); h end June-mid-Sep), a temporary complex of bars, clubs, cinema, and even fitness areas, has run in different locations for more than five years.

For information on the local scene talk to the friendly folk at *Libreria Babele* (p163), and pick up the monthly magazine *AUT*, which has up-to-date listings, including the city's increasing number of cruising clubs, and is published by *Circolo Mario Mieli* (p289). Lesbians can also find out more at *Coordinamento Lesbiche Italiano* (p290), which has a recommended women-only restaurant, Luna e L'Altra (men are allowed at lunch).

Most gay venues (bars and clubs) require you to have an *Arcigay* ([www.arcigayroma.it](http://www.arcigayroma.it)) membership card. These cost €15/8 per year/month and are available from any venue where you have to have one.

Most gay saunas open from 2pm or 3pm until very late and admission is around €15 with a compulsory *Arcigay* card (which you can buy at the saunas).

**Apollion** (Map pp90-1; % 06 482 53 89; Via Mecenate 59a)

**Europa Multiclub** (Map pp90-1; % 06 482 36 50; Via Aureliana 40)

**Mediterraneo** (Map pp108-9; % 06 772 05 934; Via P Villari 3)

Men and women carouse at Rome's gay beach, Il Buco, in the dunes 9km south of Lido di Ostia. Outdoor cruising delights are still to be found after dark on the Monte Caprino side of the Capitoline hill.

## SKYLINE

Map pp108-9 Club

% 06 700 94 31; [www.skylineclub.it](http://www.skylineclub.it); Via Pontremoli 36; admission with *Arcigay* membership; h 10.30pm-4am Mon-Sat, 5pm-4am Sun; m San Giovanni

With new larger premises, gay bar-club Skyline has gone from strength to strength, and we're not just talking about the muscular types who like to mingle here. There are bar areas, a video room, dark areas and cubicles. Mondays are naked.

## CELIO

### COMING OUT

Map pp108-9 Bar

% 06 700 98 71; Via di San Giovanni in Laterano 8; h 11am-2am; m Colosseo  
Spot this easy-going gay bar in the shadow of the Colosseum by the rainbow sign and the mixed, convivial crowds spilling out into the street.

### GLADIATORI HOTEL TERRACE BAR

Map pp108-9 Bar

% 06 775 91 380; Via Labicana 125; h 4pm-midnight; m Colosseo

A small flower-ringed terrace on the rooftop of the swish little Hotel Gladiatori, this bar is open to all. It has a fantastic view of the Colosseum and is ideal for a

sundowner or an after-dark cocktail (€12 to €16). Well worth it for the view.

## HANGAR

Map pp90-1 Club

% 06 488 13 971; Via in Selci 69; h 10.30pm-2am Wed-Mon; m Cavour

A landmark on Rome's gay map for more than 20 years. The Italian and foreign clientele includes a number of cruising gym bunnies keen to try out the new dark room. It gets crowded at weekends and on Monday nights for the weekly porn screenings.

## IL PENTAGRAPPOLO

Map pp108-9 Wine Bar

% 06 709 63 01; Via Celimontana 21b; h noon-3pm & 6pm-1am; m Colosseo; a  
A few blocks from the Colosseo, this star-vaulted place has 250 labels to choose from and about 15 wines by the glass. There's live jazz or soul from about 10pm and *aperitivo* (6pm to 8.30pm). Readers have had fun here, as well as at the *enoteca* opposite, *Kot-tabus* (% 06 772 01 145; Via Celimontana; h 7pm-1am).

## AVENTINO & TESTACCIO

IL SEME E LA FOGLIA Map pp108-9 Bar

% 06 574 30 08; Via Galvani 18; h 8am-2am Mon-Sat, closed 1 wk Aug; m Piramide

Once upon a time an ordinary bar, the position of this place at the edge of Testaccio's nightlife strip has seen it become a hip pre-club stop. It's tangerine-coloured and tiny inside, with street-side seating where you can eargwig conversations on topics as diverse as nihilism and where to go next.

## LINARI

Map pp108-9 Café

% 06 578 23 58; Via Nicola Zabaglia 9; h 6am-10pm Wed-Mon; g or j Via Marmorata

Spot this by the crowds of old-time locals. It has the busy clatter of a good bar, with excellent pastries, splendid coffee and bar-side banter. There are some outside tables but you'll have to fight the elderly ladies of the neighbourhood to get one.

## AKAB

Map pp108-9 Club

% 06 574 78 26; [www.akabcave.com](http://www.akabcave.com); Via di Monte Testaccio 68/69; h midnight-5am Tue-Sat; m Piramide; a

This eclectic former workshop has an underground cellar, an upper floor, a garden and a classically whimsical door policy. On Saturday the two levels pulsate to R & B

and the latest house music, while Friday nights Akab zips up its boots and goes back to its roots with live music.

## ETÒ

Map pp108-9 Club

% 06 574 82 68; Via Galvani 46; m Piramide; a  
A shiny, hi-tech club, hosting shiny, dressed-up people, Etò plays commercial house and dance to a lively crowd, and serves knock-your-socks-off cocktails. Most summers it moves to the terrace of the *Palazzo dei Congressi* (p118) in EUR: go-go dancers on the walls of Mussolini's stern architecture have to be seen to be believed.

## FAKE

Map pp108-9 Club

Via di Monte Testaccio 64; h 8am-5pm Wed-Sun; m Piramide; a  
Fake has gone through a few changes of hands over recent years but this venue has maintained its popularity for its laid-back atmosphere. The pop-art décor is looking a bit tired but it's having a refit, and the floaty harem-styled seating area makes you feel like you're on holiday. Although it's a club it's laid-back enough to go for a drink; there's no admission charge and cocktails are €10.

## L'ALIBI

Map pp108-9 Club

% 06 574 34 48; Via di Monte Testaccio 40; h 11.45pm-5am Wed-Sun; m Piramide  
L'Alibi attracts a mixed gay and straight crowd. Spread over three floors, including a huge summer roof terrace, it has sofas to relax on and commercial music to shake your ass to.

## METAVERSO

Map pp108-9 Club

% 06 574 47 12; [www.metaverso.com](http://www.metaverso.com); Via di Monte Testaccio 38a; h 10.30pm-5am, closed Jul & Aug; m Piramide; a  
The smallest, friendliest place on the Monte Testaccio strip, cellar-club Metaverso packs in a cool, alternative crowd, and plays mostly hip-hop and electronica, with the occasional foray into out-there stuff like acid house. Projections of old movies in the arched interior make it doubly hip. Admission is around €5 and drinks are cheap.

## VILLAGGIO GLOBALE

Map pp108-9 Club

% 06 573 00 329; Lungotevere Testaccio; m Piramide  
Rome's former slaughterhouse houses the extraordinary Villaggio Globale *centro*



*sociale*. Resembling a grungy, down-at-heel student union, with lots of skinning up, dreadlocks, cheap beer and hip-hop styling, the centre stages some great gigs – recent stars have included the Beastie Boys. Winter events take place in a huge circus tent, Spazio Boario (so called as it's in the former 'cattle yard').

**L'OASI DELLA BIRRA** *Map pp108–9* **Pub**  
% 06 574 61 22; Piazza Testaccio 41;  
h 8am–2.30pm & 4.30pm–midnight Mon–Sat,  
7.30pm–12.30am Sun; m Piramide; a  
The Oasis of Beer is just that, with over 500 different types. But this isn't just a beer-lover's dream, it's charming, with intimate seating in the cellars beneath a well-stocked *enoteca* and lots of good food to soak up the alcohol, such as hearty stews (goulash €14) or cheeses and cold cuts (six/eight varieties €15.50/18.50). Next door is an excellent *formaggeria* (cheese shop), if you're here during the day.

**OSTIENSE & SAN PAOLO**  
**DOPPIOZERO** *Map pp108–9* **Bar**  
% 06 573 01 961; Via Ostiense 68; h 7am–2am,  
closed 1 wk Aug; m Piramide; a  
Fashionable Romans flock to this easy-going, trendy bar that is all things to all people. Sleek and modern, it serves coffee and pastries for breakfast; pizza by the slice or snacks for lunch; tea in the afternoon; and *aperitivo* between 6.30pm and 9pm.

**ALPHEUS** *Map pp108–9* **Club**  
% 06 574 78 26; www.alpheus.it; Via del Commercio 36; h 10pm–4am Thu–Sun; m Piramide; a  
At Alpheus sounds vary from room to room, and with four halls that makes for a mixed crowd, or, at least, one that likes variety. It hosts everything from Argentine

tango to house, hip-hop, rock and soul, while Saturday is Gorgeous, gay night.

**DISTILLERIE CLANDESTINE** *Map pp108–9* **Club**  
% 06 573 05 102; www.distillerieclandestine.com;  
Via Libetta 13; h 10pm–4am Thu–Sun;  
m Piramide; a  
One of Rome's umbrella venues, this funky place hauls in the hipsters. As well as a bass-thumping club, there's a swing room: an American bar with what look like light sabres suspended above the bar. Then there's the dark, neon-lit R & B room with a house and dance soundtrack, and – gasp – a smoking room.

**GOA** *Map pp108–9* **Club**  
% 06 574 82 77; Via Libetta 13; h 11pm–3am  
Wed–Sun Oct–May; m Garbatella; a  
For a night of hands-in-the-air, flickering plasma screens, dancers on podiums and moments of house-induced euphoria, Goa is the place. It's Rome's best big club, with international names, a dressed-to-the-nines crowd and heavies on the door. Recent guest DJs include Sven Väth and Louie Vega, while every Thursday Claudio Cocoluto spins house, electronic and experimental sounds. It hosts Rome's only lesbian night, Venus Rising, on the last Sunday of the month.

**CLASSICO VILLAGE** *Map pp108–9* **Live Music**  
% 06 574 33 64; www.classico.it; Via Libetta 3;  
h 9pm–1.30am Mon–Thu, 11pm–4am Fri & Sat;  
m Garbatella; a  
Well worth a look is this eclectic converted factory with a bar, restaurant and live-music venue, hosting music of all genres, and centred on a lovely courtyard.

**LA CASA DEL JAZZ** *Map pp108–9* **Live Music**  
% 06 70 47 31; www.casajazz.it; Viale di Porta Ardeatina 55; h 7.30pm–midnight Tue–Sat,  
noon–midnight Sun; m Piramide  
In the middle of a 2500-sq-metre park in the southern suburbs, the Casa del Jazz (House of Jazz) is housed in a charming three-storey 1920s villa that belonged to a Mafia boss. When he was caught the Comune di Roma (Rome Council) converted it into a beautiful jazz-tastic complex. There's a 150-seat auditorium, rehearsal rooms, a café and a restaurant.

## TRASTEVERE

Enchantingly pretty, Trastevere is one of the city's most popular areas to wander, drink and decide what to do afterwards, and the streets in summer are packed, with stalls, bars spilling into the street, and a carnival atmosphere.

### EAST OF VIALE DI TRASTEVERE

**BIG MAMA** *Map pp122–3* **Live Music**  
% 06 581 25 51; www.bigmama.it in Italian; Vicolo di San Francesco a Ripa 18; annual membership €13; h 9.30pm–1.30am Tue–Sun Oct–mid-Jun;  
g or j Viale di Trastevere; a  
To wallow in the Eternal City blues, there's only one place to go – this cramped Trastevere basement. It's also good for jazz, funk, soul and R & B. There are weekly residencies from well-known Italian musicians and songwriters and frequent concerts by international artists. You can reserve a table via phone or online.

### WEST OF VIALE DI TRASTEVERE

**BAR LE CINQUE** *Map pp122–3* **Bar**  
Vicolo del Cinque 5; h 6am–2am Mon–Sat;  
g or j Piazza Sonnino  
There's no sign outside, and it looks like a run-down ordinary bar, but this is a Trastevere favourite, and always has a small crowd clustered around outside, here for the nice location, easy-going vibe and cheap drinks.

**BAR SAN CALISTO** *Map pp122–3* **Bar**  
% 06 583 58 69; Piazza San Calisto; h 6am–1.30am Mon–Sat; g or j Piazza Sonnino  
Those in the know head to this down-at-heel bar for its basic, stuck-in-time atmosphere and cheap prices (a large beer costs €2.50). It's the most bohemian bar in the area and attracts everyone from dodgy drug dealers and long-term soaks to elderly matrons and American students. It's famous for its chocolate – drunk hot with cream in winter, eaten as soft, creamy ice cream in summer.

**FRENI E FRIZIONI** *Map pp122–3* **Bar**  
% 06 583 34 210; Via del Politeanna 4;  
h 10am–2am; g Piazza Trilussa; a  
One of Rome's coolest bars, Freni e Frizioni (meaning 'brakes and clutches' – the venue

was once a garage) is close to the Tiber. It's run by the same people as equally hip *Société Lucète* (p214). Inside mixes vintage furniture and modern art, outside happening crowds fill the entire little piazza at night. Drinks are reasonable and *aperitivo* a bargain (beers/cocktails cost €5/7 from 7.30pm to 10.30pm).

**FRIENDS ART CAFÉ** *Map pp122–3* **Bar**  
% 06 581 61 11; Piazza Trilussa 34; h 8am–2am;  
g Piazza Trilussa; a  
This hi-tech steel-and-chrome favourite is a glitzy, cheerful, noisy spot and offers a bountiful *aperitivo* (€6 to €7). There are two other branches at *Via Piave 69–73* (*Map pp150–1*); % 06 420 14 285; Piazza Fiume; h 7.30am–2am daily except Sun (afternoon) and *Via della Scrofa 59* (*Map pp74–5*); % 06 686 14 16; h 8am–2am). All have wi-fi access.

**GARBO** *Map pp122–3* **Bar**  
% 06 583 20 782; Vicolo di Santa Margherita 1a;  
h 10pm–2am Tue–Sun; g or j Piazza Sonnino  
Camp and cosy, and all red velvet, red fairy lights and gilt mirrors, this snug gay venue is more about couples than cruising.

**OMBRE ROSSE** *Map pp122–3* **Bar**  
% 06 588 41 55; Piazza Sant'Egidio 12;  
h 7.30am–2am Mon–Sat, 7.30am–7pm Sun;  
g Piazza Trilussa; a  
One of the cornerstones of the Trastevere drinking scene, this bar sits on a pretty piazza under a shady tree, the sought-after outside tables surrounded by hanging flower baskets. A great place to watch the world wander past.

**DI MARZIO** *Map pp122–3* **Café**  
% 06 581 60 95; Piazza Santa Maria in Trastevere 15; h 7am–2am Wed–Mon; g or j Piazza Sonnino  
For ringside seats on Trastevere's most entertaining piazza – one of the loveliest in Rome – take a table at this ordinary but sublimely set café. Prices are high (cocktails €9) but the view is great.

**LETTERE CAFFÈ GALLERY** *Map pp122–3* **Live Music**  
% 06 583 43 79; Via San Francesco a Ripa 100/101;  
h 6.30pm–2am; g Piazza Trilussa; a  
This literary café is one of the best examples of Rome's trend for bars crossed with

## top picks

### CLUBS

- La Maison (p216)
- Metaverso (p223)
- Villaggio Globale (p223)
- Goa (right)
- Circolo degli Artisti (p222)



bookshops. You like books? You like blues and jazz? Then you'll love Lettere Caffè. Performances usually start at 10pm, followed by DJs playing indie and new wave.

**ARTÙ** *Map pp122-3* Pub  
% 06 588 03 98; Largo Fumasoni Biondi 5;  
h 6pm-2am Tue-Sun; g or j Piazza Sonnino;  
a

This diminutive, dark-panelled *birreria* (beer shop) with stained-glass windows and an open fireplace feels half-pub, half-bar. Perhaps that's why it's such a favourite of thirsty expats. Ideal for a lingering beer.

**GOOD CAFFÈ** *Map pp122-3* Wine Bar

% 06 972 77 979; Via Santa Dorotea 9;  
h 7pm-2am Mon-Sat; g Piazza Trilussa; a  
In a charming ivy-hung location on a cobbled street, albeit a bit busy with passing cars, this is indeed good with a cosy wood-lined interior. It's a popular place to hang out, have a quick meal, a long drink or make use of the free wi-fi (particularly popular with American students from nearby John Cabot Uni). There are weekend DJs, *aperitivi* (6.30pm to 9.30pm) and a cocktail costs only €6 (€9 after 6pm).

## ENOTECA TRASTEVERE

*Map pp122-3* Wine Bar

% 06 588 56 59; Via della Lungaretta 86; h 6pm-midnight Thu-Tue; g or j Piazza Sonnino; a  
A popular, unusually spacious *enoteca* in Trastevere, with little painted tables and chairs inside and out. Glasses of wine start at €4 and there are over 500 from which to choose, with a long menu of good if over-priced snacks to accompany them.

## VATICAN CITY & BORGO

Around the Vatican nestle some charming wine bars and splendid cafés and pastry stops. For nightlife there are a couple of live music venues, including Italy's best jazz club.

**ART STUDIO CAFÉ** *Map pp130-1* Café

% 06 972 77 286; www.artstudiocafe.com; Via dei Gracchi 187a; h 9am-11pm Mon-Sat; m Ottaviano-San Pietro; a  
An unusual modern café that's spacious and airy, with white seating and lots of *objets d'art* for decoration and for sale. It also houses an interesting, accessible mosaic

school, where you can take classes in the ancient art.

**CASTRONI** *Map pp130-1* Café

% 06 687 43 83; Via Cola di Rienzo 196;  
h 8am-8pm; m Ottaviano-San Pietro; a  
This *food shop* (p178) harbours a great café with splendid coffee and snacks. You can stand at the busy bar or sit at outside tables.

**FAGGIANI** *Map pp130-1* Café

% 06 397 39 742; Via G Ferrari 23-29;  
h 6.30am-9.30pm; m Lepanto  
Some of the best coffee and *cornetti* (croissants) in Rome are served up here in old-fashioned style by waistcoat-wearing *barristi*. There are a few streetside tables, but most customers get their daily fix at the polished bar.

**GRAN CAFFÈ ESPERIA** *Map pp130-1* Café

% 06 320 39 71; Lungotevere dei Mellini 1;  
h Mon-Sat; g Piazza Cavour; a  
This revamped Art Nouveau café is separated from the river by a busy road. Large and glittery, it's full of polished wood, brass and crystal chandeliers, and filled by a conservative crowd of well-dressed professionals enjoying the coffee and cakes.

**ALEXANDERPLATZ** *Map pp130-1* Live Music

% 06 397 42 171; www.alexanderplatz.it;  
Via Ostia 9; admission with membership €10;  
h 9pm-1.30am; m Ottaviano-San Pietro; a  
The big daddy of jazz clubs in a city that loves jazz, Alexanderplatz attracts a passionate crowd and some huge names; George Coleman and Lionel Hampton are two regular performers. You'll need to book a table if you want dinner, and the music starts around 10.30pm. From July to September, the club moves outside to the grounds of *Villa Cellimontana* (p110) for an enchanting outdoor festival.

**FONCLEA** *Map pp130-1* Live Music

% 06 689 63 02; Via Crescenzo 82a; h 8.30pm-1.30am Sep-Jun; g Piazza del Risorgimento; a  
The best place for a night out in the Borgo, this is a great little pub-venue for live music, usually featuring cover bands playing anything from jazz to soul, funk to rock. In July and August Fonclea moves outside – phone for the location.

## CENTRI SOCIALI

Rome's *centri sociali* (social centres) are an unusual feature of Italy's music scene. They are organised squats – centres of anti-establishment counter-culture set up in the 1970s in disused public buildings, such as factories, garages or industrial estates. Then squatters regularly battled with police, while nowadays most have been around long enough to be part of the establishment. However, they still offer Rome's most unusual and alternative entertainment, including gigs, club nights and exhibitions. They're also a bargain, in accordance with their ethic of accessible culture.

Most important are **Forte Prenestino** (% 06 218 07 855; Via F Delpino Centocelle), housed in a fort east of the city centre, **Rialtosantambrogio** (p218), **Brancaleone** (below) and **Villaggio Globale** (p223) in Testaccio.

**TASTEVIN** *Map pp130-1* Wine Bar

% 06 320 80 56; Via Ciro Menotti 16; h 1-3.30pm & 8pm-midnight Tue-Fri, 8pm-midnight Sat; g Piazza Giuseppe Mazzini; a  
Tastevin's tiny, cool interior is a great escape on a summer's day and it has an exceptional collection of 1005 Italian and French wines, including an excellent choice of Barolo and Brunelli. While you drink you can nibble on cheeses and salamis, tuck into a daily hot dish or chomp on a choice of salads.

## VILLA BORGHESE & NORTHERN ROME

Not the most happening of areas, the genteel northern suburbs nevertheless have a few great places to drink or head out to for a big night out.

**ROSATI** *Map pp150-1* Café

% 06 322 58 59; Piazza del Popolo 5;  
h 7.30am-11.30pm; m Flaminio; a  
Historically Rosati, overlooking the vast disc of the piazza, was the hang-out of the left-wing chattering classes. Authors Italo Calvino and Alberto Moravia used to drink here while their right-wing counterparts went to the *Canova* (*Map pp90-1*; % 06 361 22 31; Piazza del Popolo 16; h 8am-midnight a ) over the square. Today tourists are the main clientele at both.

**BRANCALEONE** *off Map pp150-1* Club

% 06 820 00 959; Via Levanna 11; g Via Nomentana; a  
It's a bit of a schlep, but this *centro sociale* is one of the big guns of Rome's music

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scene, and worth the journey if there's a good line-up. It attracts superstar DJs serving up an eclectic range of music – usually house, hip-hop, drum 'n' bass, reggae and electronica – and playing to a young, boisterous, alternative crowd. Skate kids will like it.

**QUBE** *off Map pp150-1* Club

% 06 438 54 450; Via di Portonaccio 212;  
m Tiburtina; a  
With three floors, Qube is Rome's largest disco. Thursday is Radio Rock night; Saturday is UnderG.R.A.und, with hip-hop and R & B on the ground floor, disco revival on the first floor and minimal, electro and techno upstairs (with guest DJs such as Trentemøller and Oliver Huntemann). Prices vary. Rome's biggest gay and lesbian one-nighter, *Muccassassina* (Cow Assassina; www.muccassassina.com), takes place on Fridays. It's run by Circolo Mario Mieli, who also organises Gay Pride. In July and August it moves outdoors (with live show and cruising garden) – check the website for the current location.

**LA PALMA** *off Map pp150-1* Live Music

% 06 435 99 029; www.lapalmaclub.it in Italian; Via Giuseppe Mirri 35; h 8.30pm-2am Mon-Thu, 8.30pm-3am Fri & Sat, closed Aug; g Via Tiburtina; a  
Jazz-heads rate this place on a par with Alexanderplatz. It's housed in two large 18th-century houses on a former farm, and a bit of a hike out from the centre, but worth it if you're on the hunt for quality jazz, classical music or diverse DJs. In summer there's a balmy jazz festival in the courtyard.