

# *Hotel Lancelot Walks & Itinerearies*

## *S Peters to Piazza Venezia*



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*This stretch of walk between St Peters and Piazza Venezia is about 3 kms. There are many fascinating streets and alleyways to explore between Campo dei Fiori and Castel Sant'Angelo and there are many places to stop and rest along the way.*

### **St Peters**

To reach St Peters from Hotel Lancelot or to return, take the 81 or 87 bus from Piazza Risorgimento, just north of St Peters.

You will need at least 2 hours to visit St Peters and you should only consider stopping here if you cannot come back for a more thorough visit. The dress code for St Peters is strictly enforced and men in shorts and women with short dresses and bare arms will not be admitted.

The original basilica of St Peters was built by emperor Constantine in 320 near the tomb of Saint Peter. Around 1450, reconstruction works were first undertaken by Bernardo Rossellino, and then Bramante who designed a Greek-cross plan basilica which was taken up by Michelangelo in 1547. Finally Carlo Maderno took over and reverted to the Latin-cross plan first proposed by Raphael. The church was officially consecrated in 1626.

The square facing St. Peter's with the four-row colonnade was designed by Bernini. The building is 136 m. high, the diameter of the Cupola, designed by Michelangelo, measures 42 m. It is possible to reach the top of the Cupola by climbing the 330 steps: once up there the view of the square below and of Rome is unforgettable.

The church contains the masterpieces of important artists: the 29 m. high bronze baldachin by Bernini, the Pietà by Michelangelo, the tomb of Clement XIII by Canova and the mosaic of the Navicella by Giotto, located above the middle entrance to the Portico. Numerous and timeless are the works of art, mainly paintings, kept in the Vatican Museums, which preserve the art of the most illustrious artists of all times. A visit to the Sistine Chapel, a milestone in the history of Italian painting, should not be missed.

### **Castel Sant'Angelo**

It is suggested that you walk down Via dei Corridori Borgo S. Angelo which follows the fortified walk way connecting St Peters and Castel Sant' Angelo. Popes would use this walkway in times of danger.

The Castle was originally built as the Emperor Hadrian's mausoleum in AD 135. Since then it has been a fortress, prison and papal residence. The unique monument houses the National Museum where, besides the stuccoes, frescoes and furniture of the papal apartments, one can also admire an important collection of ancient arms.

There is a panoramic view of Rome from the top of this monument. During the summer dance performances are organized on the terrace which you may be lucky enough to see.

### **Via del Governo Vecchio**

This street, and the many ally ways which lead off it, give a vivid sense of traditional the Rome of small workshops and traders.

### **Piazza Navona**

The piazza gets its shape from the ruins of Emperor Domitian's stadium (AD 86) on which it stands. Over the centuries the square became a place for games, tournaments and processions. From the 17th to the 19th centuries the square used to be flooded to allow barges for the nobility to parade in a background of fireworks.

In the centre of the square is Bernini's dramatic Fontana dei Fiumi, or four rivers fountain. Four allegorical statues portray the Nile, the Ganges, the Danube and the Rio de la Plata, symbolizing the four corners of the world. Overlooking the central fountain is church of Sant'Agnese in Agonia designed by the great architect Borromini.

From the beginning of December till Epiphany (6 January), this piazza is occupied by stalls selling sweets and toys.

### **Pasquino**

Piazza di Pasquino is known for the torso of a statue representing Menelaus with the body of Patroclus, but which became known as Pasquino after the name of a tailor who lived nearby and who had a reputation for lampooning the powerful. His tradition continues as messages and poems continue to be placed at the base of the statue.

### **Largo Argentina**

### **Piazza Mattei**

This cosy piazza is dominated by one of Rome's loveliest fountains which was designed by Giacomo della Porta some time in the 1580s. The tortoises, for which the fountain is now named, was added in the following century by Bernini.

### **Campidoglio**

Campidoglio, or Capitoline, was the most important of Rome's seven hills. The piazza at the top of the hill was designed by Michelangelo in the 1530s and took over a hundred years to complete. The grand stairs leading up to the piazza were also designed by Michelangelo. The building opposite the stairs is Rome's city hall. At the centre of the piazza is a magnificent second century equestrian statue.

### **Piazza Venezia**

This is the center of Rome and there are several important monuments, ruins and museums in the vicinity.

The Piazza is dominated by the Vittoriano – a monument to Italy's unification. From *Piazza Venezia* you can continue along one of the other routes suggested. *It takes about 15 minutes to walk from Piazza Venezia to the Lancelot along the Via dei Fori Imperiali. Alternatively, there are several buses you can take (85, 87 or 117).*