

Advance Praise

“For those Rome visitors, who, post Forum, Vatican, and Colosseum, might be sighing for more sites to conquer, Bill Richards and Silvia Prosperi have good news for you! Their guidebook, *103 Other Adventures In and Around Rome*, opens a great new vista for fun and exploration with the family. For Bill Richards’ third effort in his travel series geared to families with kids, he teamed up with Roman tour guide Silvia Prosperi to delve into the wealth of things to see and do in Rome and its region of Lazio. Teaching as it inspires, *103 Other Adventures In and Around Rome* starts with a chronological organization of sites. This provides a helpful introduction to the millennia of history from Etruscans to Romans to Popes to Revolutionaries. The book then unfolds into what might be described as a three-star menu of activities arranged by individual tastes. Want art? Choose from Classic to Contemporary. Walks, wine, water sports, and more, a complete feast right down to a sweet treat in Rome’s century-old chocolate shop! This book is a terrific resource for locals as well as tourists, as Prosperi and Richards have found about every treasure Lazio has to offer (who knew there was the world’s fastest zipline twenty-five miles south of Rome?).

Furthermore, this is a guidebook that is not only a wealth of material but is user friendly. *103 Other Adventures In and Around Rome* breaks down each site by the most common questions any parent (or tourist) would ask: what is it, how much does it cost, how do I get there, and, the all-important, is it worth it? The collaboration of tour guide and parent not only makes each site feel like a must-see but renders the voyage feasible. They strike a perfect balance between understanding what tots, teens, and tweens will enjoy and how to get the most out of the travel experience.

After all the impediments of travel during the pandemic, *103 Other Adventures In and Around Rome* will inspire (and help!) parents to pack up the kids and move beyond the crowded tourist magnets to plumb the depths of Lazio (did I mention the caves?). Most importantly, the fine work of these authors will remind readers, after a year of living virtually, how rewarding the real experiences of seeing, climbing, swimming, tasting, and yes, ziplining are.”

Elizabeth Lev

Tour Guide, Art Historian, and Author



“Rome has a way of getting under your skin; the more of it you see, the more of it you want to discover. Having lived in Rome for over nine years, I quickly learnt that some of the most exciting parts of the city are not found in typical guidebooks. This book is different. It takes you out of “touristy” Rome and introduces you to adventures that help you to fill historical knowledge gaps and see the city in a deeper way. It’s full of ideas for repeated visits. After reading this book, you will be quickly planning your next trip to Rome to explore the next chapter.”

*Karen Ryder
Emeritus Exploring Rome Group Coordinator*

*103 Other Adventures** *In and Around Rome*

**Beyond the biggies like the Colosseum, the Pantheon, and the Vatican*

By Bill Richards & Silvia Proserpi



**RUMBLE
BOOKS**

PRESENTED BY A FRIEND IN ROME & FAMILY ON THE LOOSE

Acknowledgements

We have so many people to thank for helping us produce this book. First and foremost, we thank our families who supported and partnered with us in our travel and life adventures.

Bill would like to thank his parents, Bill and Fearn Richards, for first showing him that the world is a wonderful place to explore. His wife, Ashley Steel, encouraged us at every hesitation and provided invaluable suggestions throughout the writing and publishing process. His daughters also provided important support, with Zoey Richards making the maps for the book and Logan Richards acting as the director of digital outreach for *Family on the Loose*.

Silvia would like to thank her family for their support in every new project she has undertaken, particularly her son Mattia for being so patient during the long video calls with Bill during the writing of this book! A special thanks to Antonio for walking many miles during the last three years in every kind of weather, consuming all of his annual leave days to explore hidden corners of Lazio. Silvia's friends and colleagues have enhanced her inherent curiosity and have always been ready to try new adventures together.

And we'd both like to thank the Explore Rome Group, which is where we met and this fun book writing adventure began.

Many tour guides associated with *A Friend in Rome* and *Around Rome Day Trips*, who we are happy to call friends, were very kind to double check our initial drafts in their area of expertise: Nicole Ciceroni, Irene Chinappi, Federica Dal Palù, Francesca Di Marzo, Arianna Fusco, Irene Maestri, Laura Nicotra, Micaela Pavoncello, Luca Pietrosanti, Elena Ronca, and Daniela Stampatori. Patrizio Fortuna created illustrations specifically for the book. Amanda Elkin edited the text and vastly improved our writing. Matt Mayerchak and Laura Glassman are the awesome graphic design team that made the book so beautiful.

Roman Numeral Primer: It seemed logical to have the adventures in this book identified by Roman numerals. Here's a key to how the system works:

| | | | | | | |
|---------|----------|-----------|------------|----------|-----------|------------|
| I = 1 | VI = 6 | XI = 11 | XVI = 16 | XX = 20 | LX = 60 | C = 100 |
| II = 2 | VII = 7 | XII = 12 | XVII = 17 | XXX = 30 | LXX = 70 | CI = 101 |
| III = 3 | VIII = 8 | XIII = 13 | XVIII = 18 | XL = 40 | LXXX = 80 | CII = 102 |
| IV = 4 | IX = 9 | XIV = 14 | XIX = 19 | L = 50 | XC = 90 | CIII = 103 |
| V = 5 | X = 10 | XV = 15 | | | | |



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Introduction

Rome is truly an amazing place, but you don't need this book to tell you that. There is literally history around every corner. The food is fresh and fantastic, the culture is storied and vibrant, and the people have a zest for life that is infectious.

This “guide” book is for people that have been to Rome before or are spending an extended period of time in the Eternal City. It does not include the biggest named places that you likely came to Rome the first time to see: the Colosseum, the Forum, the Pantheon, Trevi Fountain, or the Vatican. Instead, it highlights the myriad of other places of interest and adventure: places that help fill gaps in the historical story of ancient Rome; places that illuminate the past and present of Rome's art and music culture; places like hilltop villages and swimming holes that provide an escape from the city's busyness within a short train ride.

This book is for people who want to “level-up” in their Rome discoveries. It is for people looking for adventures beyond the tourist core. It is for families. It is for day-trippers. It is for history nerds looking for a deeper understanding. It is for people comfortable with public transportation and also for people who prefer driving a car. It is for people who are both adventurous and curious about the world around them.

With a few exceptions, most of the adventures in this book are in the region of Lazio, which is where the city of Rome is located. Lazio is made up of five provinces: Rome in the middle, Viterbo and Rieti to the north, and Frosinone and Latina to the south. Each of the adventures can be accomplished in a day or less, though the ones at the edges of Lazio might be better explored on a weekend when you have more time.

This book does not attempt to detail all the information you might want to know about a place. Rather, it identifies and describes the sights and adventures you should not miss during your extended explorations of Rome. The rest is up to you — we don't want to compromise your sense of self-discovery when you get to these places.

The adventures in this book follow a similar format. First, we offer a short description of the adventure and why you might want to go there. Next, we discuss where it is and how to get there. This section includes public transit options, but many adventures are off the beaten path and require your own transportation, be that a taxi, a car share, a rental, or your own little Fiat (tips for driving in Rome is a whole different book!). Scooter and bicycle rentals are also readily available to access adventures within the city. All distances given in this section are “as the crow flies” from *Piazza Venezia* in *Centro Storico* (the central neighborhood of Rome). There is also an estimate of the time and money needed for each adventure, though these variables depend on your haste and desired comfort. Please note that much of this book was written during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns. Some site details, such as entrance fees or opening times, were modified during this time to adhere to travel restrictions and are subject to change when normal operations resume. Please also note that we only include adult pricing, since entry fees for children or students typically vary on a sliding scale. Everything **FREE** is noted as such.

For families, we estimate the age suitability for each adventure, from toddlers to teens, and we recommend whether hiring a guide would enhance your adventure. Generally, if the adventure has anything to do with the history of Rome, having a guide that brings stories to life and fills your imagination with the subtleties of the time is utterly invaluable.

And finally, we recommend the best time to go on each adventure, offer fun facts, and suggest activities to enrich your experience. We have also included websites for each adventure, but encourage you to exercise your own skill at searching for the additional information you might need before heading out. Many of the websites are in Italian, but look to use the “translate” feature through your browser or a link to an English version of the site.

We wrote this book to share our love of Rome and illustrate the diversity of exploration possible in the entire region of Lazio, which has over 2,500 years of history. Bill is a travel writer who has lived in and visited many places in the world, including as a family with his wife and two kids. Silvia is a professional tour guide who knows more about Rome than just about anyone. Together, we make an inquisitive and experienced team who are always looking for the next adventure.

Artful Adventures

Classics

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Doria Pamphilj Gallery

The *Galleria Doria Pamphilj* (not a typo) contains the private art collection of the Doria Pamphilj family. Much of the historic wealth of the family stems from Pope Innocent X (né Pamphilj), who was head of the church from 1644 to 1655. He and his sister-in-law, Olimpia Maidalchini, were able to grow a fortune that was used to develop this collection. Much of the art is from the 16th and 17th centuries and includes works by Velazquez, Caravaggio, Bernini, the Bruegels, and Raphael.

Why go? There are really two stars here, the art in the gallery and the palace where the gallery is located. The gallery begins on the second floor of the palazzo by entering through a grand entrance hall — two stories of large windows and even larger paintings. Then there are royal apartments, furniture, a stunning ballroom, and a chapel before the focus shifts back to paintings and sculpture. The rooms where the entire wall space is given over to paintings of various shapes and sizes are amazing.



Where? The entrance to the gallery is 150 meters up *Via del Corso* from *Piazza Venezia*, in the center of everything.



Cost and time? Tickets to the gallery cost €15/person and should be reserved ahead of time (see their website). People are let into the gallery in discrete groups at two-hour intervals. Each group must leave before the next group is allowed to enter.



Kids? Though some kids will love to see the inside of the palazzo, most little kids will need a task stay engaged — perhaps counting all the dogs in the paintings? Teenagers may be intrigued by the golden age of papal wealth and might find the first-person audio guide of the apartment interesting.



Guide? Admission includes an audio guide narrated by current members of the Doria Pamphilj family, which provides a fascinating window into their world, both past and present.



When? The museum is open everyday from 10 am to 8 pm with a reservation. Check the website for updated information. This museum is often one of the few open on Mondays.

FUN FACTS

- * Listen on the audio guide for when the present-day Doria Pamphilj speak about Olimpia Maidalchini and how they are still benefiting from her shrewd business deals.
- * Other properties once owned and named after the Doria Pamphilj family include *Villa Doria Pamphilj*, a major city park on the west side of Rome, and *Palazzo Pamphilj*, a palace on *Piazza Navona* that is now home to the Brazilian Embassy (tours by reservation through their website).

Enrichment: *The Café Doria (at Via della Gatta 1) on the backside of the palace has some excellent post-museum desserts. Other palaces and villas in Rome that are art galleries open to the public include Galleria Borghese, Galleria Colonna, Palazzo Barberini, and Palazzo Corsini.*

||| www.doriapamphilj.it/roma/

||| www.ambasciatadelbrasile.it/palacio/visita_guidata.asp

ADVENTURE #XLIX

Palazzo Barberini

The *Palazzo Barberini* is a palace built in the early 17th century by Maffeo Barberini, who would later become Pope Urban VIII. The villa is known for its architecture and amazing frescoes, particularly the staircases and painting on the ceiling of the central salon. Today, it is home to half of the National Gallery of Ancient Art (*Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica*), and houses paintings by Raphael, Caravaggio, and El Greco, among many others.

Why go? Like all the beautiful noble residences turned into public art galleries, there are two things to see here: the art and the palace itself. Put them together and it is truly stunning, with amazing paintings highlighted in gorgeous rooms. There is a separate guided tour of the apartments on the top floor, two unforgettable stairways, and a pleasant garden in the back of the palace.



Where? *Palazzo Barberini* is only a kilometer northeast of *Piazza Venezia*. The palace is on a block bookended by *Piazza Barberini* on one side and the Four Fountains (*Quattro Fontane*) intersection on the other. There is a self-named subway stop in the piazza, which is on the A Line. But if you walked here from *Piazza Venezia* you would pretty much have to pass by the Trevi Fountain.

Epilogue

The world has changed a lot in the time it has taken to write about the adventures in this book. When the COVID-19 pandemic swept across the world, international travel was halted, museums and archeological sites were closed, and much of the joy of discovering our planet was put into hibernation. But as a result, we learned that staying closer to home could actually be healthier and more sustainable than ticking off distant destinations. As our world gradually reopens, we believe these lessons learned will continue to enlighten our travel choices and underscore the great value of slower, more intentional adventures.

We hope you find this book useful in deepening your appreciation of a truly amazing and unique city. But it is about more than just the fantastic city of Rome: it is about cherishing lifelong learning and the diversity of educational opportunities for us and our kids. And it is about finding adventures and beauty in the details of everyday life and acknowledging the wonders of all the people on this planet — past, present, and future.

Good luck, be safe, stay healthy, and have fun!



