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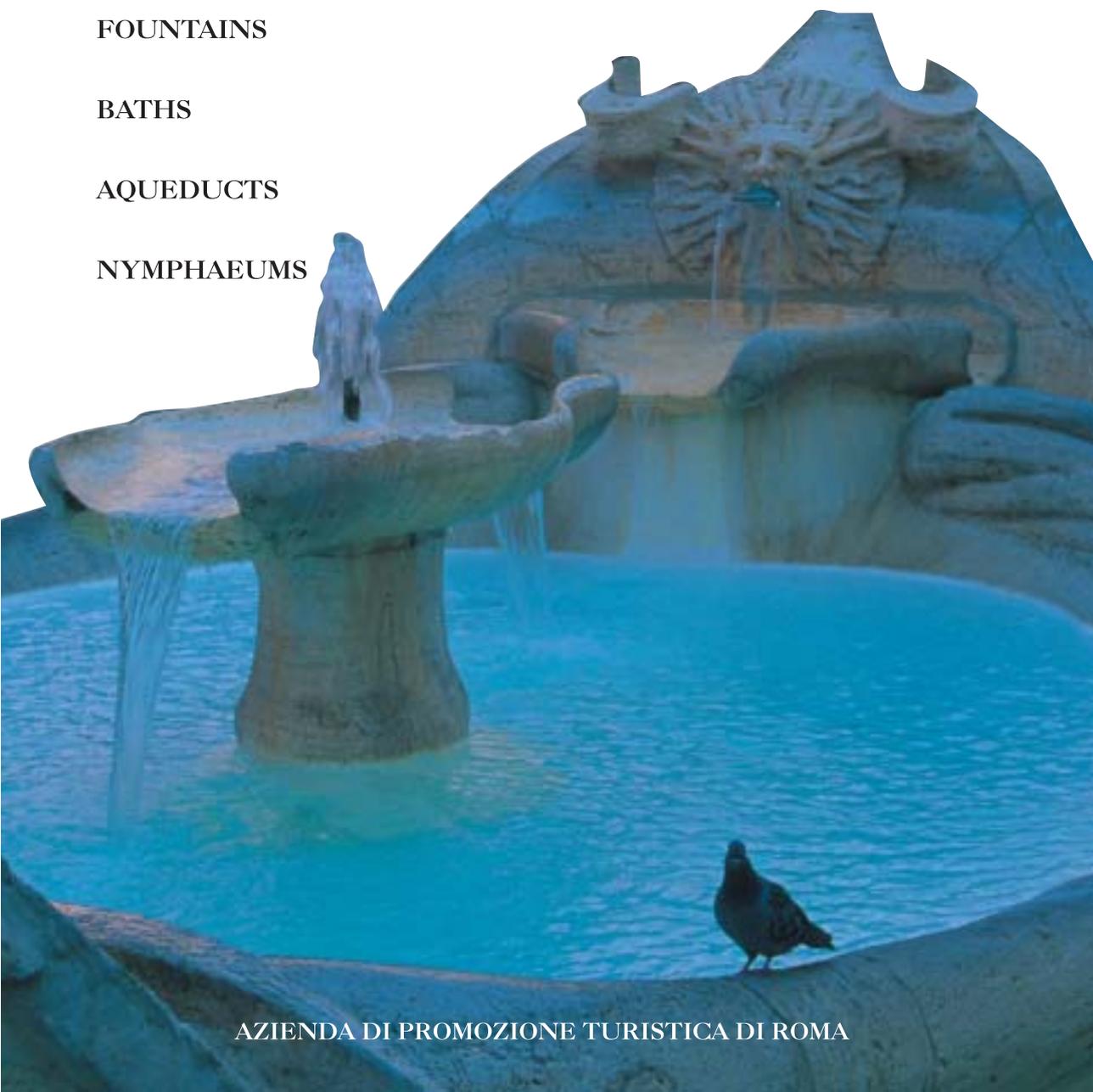
the culture of water

FOUNTAINS

BATHS

AQUEDUCTS

NYMPHAEUMS



AZIENDA DI PROMOZIONE TURISTICA DI ROMA

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A blue-tinted photograph of a traditional thatched-roof building. A person is visible on the roof, and a bird is perched on the edge of the foreground. The scene is set in a rural or historical context, likely related to water management or agriculture.

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The Pantheon



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Aerial view of the Tiber

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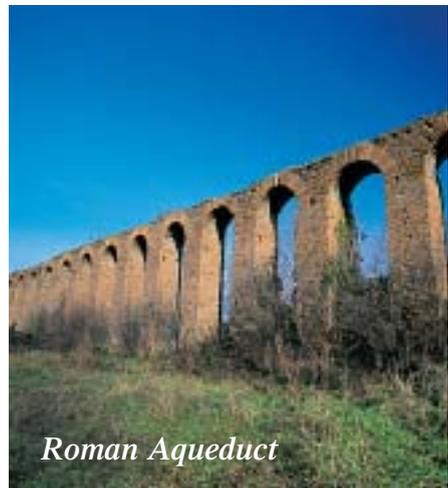
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Whoever visits Rome is impressed by the number of monuments and imposing hydraulic structures which, together with the large amount of water present in the area, have always been a feature of the urban and suburban landscape.

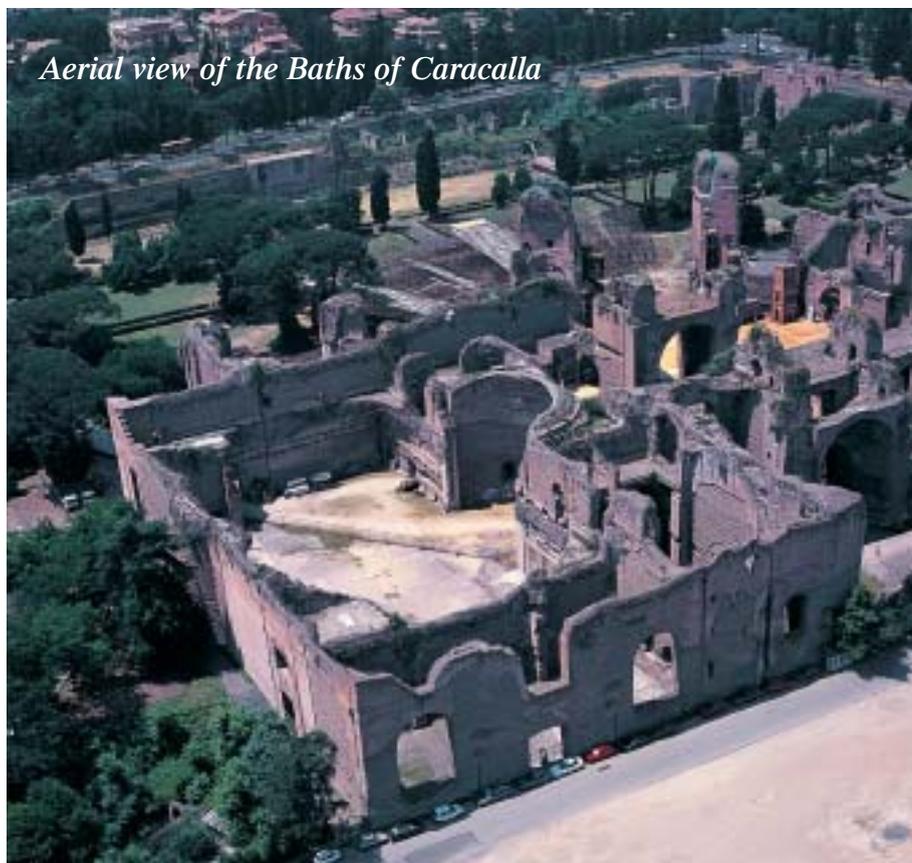
The birth and development of Rome, which in the course of time becomes the undisputed ruler of the Mediterranean, is in fact bound up with its favourable geographic position, near the river Tiber, in the vicinity of natural springs and the sea. The archaic populations that settled in the area since the early Iron Age, founded their villages on the hills near the left bank of the river Tiber by the Tiber Island. By making the crossing of the river easier, the island facilitated the connection between Etruria and Campania. The basket containing the twins Romulus and Remus, who in the 8th century BC according to legend founded Rome, was stranded nearby at the foot of the Palatine hill when the Tiber's banks overflowed. In the following centuries, important public works showing the power and wealth of Roman civilization, contributed to form the image of the city. The splendour of many of these ancient works are still visible today: reclaiming and draining of the area, bridges, port structures which permitted the exploitation of the river as the principle artery for commercial, military and economical purposes, aqueducts and monumental fountains as well as bath complexes. The latter were the most extraordinary structures ever built in Rome and in the whole empire. In the early 19th century Chateaubriand still observed "We find baths at every step, the baths of

Nero, Titus, Caracalla, Diocletian, etc. Even if Rome had been three times more populous, one tenth of those baths would have sufficient for public needs". The baths, open to everyone, were immense complexes where the ancients spent much time making use of the bathing facilities. It was also possible to consult libraries, watch shows, relax in the shade of the trees in the gardens and above all, undertake social and cultural relations. Never in history has a public structure been so large and so frequented.

Beginning in the 6th century, when the Goths led by Witigis cut the aqueducts, the population was forced to move closer to the banks of the river Tiber which became their only source of water. During the Middle Ages new occupations having to do with water and which survived until the 19th century came into being: the "vascellari" who made water jugs, the "barcaroli" who ferried people from one bank to the other, the "acquarenari" who sold river



Roman Aqueduct



Aerial view of the Baths of Caracalla

water purified by means of a particular system of sedimentation, and the “mulinari” who utilized the current of the river to operate floating mills, built along the banks.

The Romans, living in close contact with the river, also suffered the tragic consequences of the numerous floods that devastated whole districts, sowing death and destruction. The floods which from the Middle Ages to the 16th century were called “diluvi” (deluges) were documented from 414 BC to 1915. The construction of the embankments of the Lungotevere, begun in 1870 and completed only in 1926, put an end to this terrible affliction.

In the Renaissance the popes decided to renew and beautify the city that had been abandoned for a long time by promoting splendid works such as the building of new bridges, the restoration of the ancient aqueducts and above all the creation of public fountains which, in addition to providing a useful service to the population, were extremely decorative.

Monumental fountains also began to decorate the gardens and courtyards of noble palazzi, opening the way to the grandiose decorations of the Baroque period. These ornamental structures when simulating natural settings such as

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grottoes or waterfalls were named “nymphaeums” to recall similar architectural creations which the Greeks and the Romans had dedicated to the cult of the nymphs. In Baroque Rome, full of surprisingly scenographical buildings, many more fountains assuming original forms and spectacular dimensions were built as can be seen in the Fountain of the Rivers in Piazza Navona and the celebrated Fountain of Trevi. Numerous visitors still come to the city to admire these marvels, ideally following the poet Shelley who in the 19th century declared that “the fountains alone justify a visit to Rome”.

This publication aims at inviting the reader to discover some of the numerous monuments, more or less well known, which demonstrate the continuous and vital relationship

of Rome with water. The seven itineraries describe the most representative aqueducts, fountains, nymphaeums, bridges and baths to be seen along the suggested walks. The wealth of monuments, often hidden or inaccessible to the public, and the size of the city itself, have made it necessary to select the areas most frequented by Romans and tourists.

Five brief monographs conclude the publication with the description of two archeological areas of exceptional interest, the Baths of Caracalla and the Park of the Aqueducts, along with two little known sites rich in history, the Nomentano Bridge and the Nymphaeum of Egeria, and an absolute protagonist, the Tiber, finally returned today to its primary function of water way and fully integrated in the bustling life of Rome.



Navigation on the Tiber



Fountain of Moses at the Pincio

FROM VILLA BORGHESE TO PIAZZA DI SPAGNA

A century after its opening to the public in 1903, Rome celebrates Villa Borghese with a rich programme of performances, exhibits, sports events and initiatives of various kinds. For information contact the call center n. 0682077304 or consult the web site www.villaborghese.it

Villa Borghese is without a doubt the best known and most loved park among both Romans and foreign visitors, also owing to its fortunate location near the city centre. It was created starting from 1606 by the Cardinal Scipione Borghese, nephew of Pope Paul V, who wanted to transform a “vineyard outside Porta Pinciana” into a place of delight and leisure, a prestigious and representative venue to receive illustrious guests and friends. The project of this splendid suburban residence was assigned to Flaminio Ponzio, followed after his death by Giovanni Vasanzio. The villa is a valid example of the baroque taste for blending art and nature by establishing a harmonious interaction between the architectural part and the vast garden, divided into three sections. The first two, known as “Forest Garden” and “Garden of the Perspectives”, followed geometric patterns arranged along orthogonal axes and perspectives, typical of the Italian-style garden. The third and largest section had spontaneous and wild vegetation and was used as a hunting ground. Reliefs, ancient and modern statues, sarcophagi and vases were used to adorn the buildings and to indicate particular sites or to close perspective effects. The numerous fountains placed as reference points along the promenades, were the central element of the 17th century layout, as well as in the centuries carried out in the 18th and 19th

centuries.

The itinerary begins at the main building, known as Casino Nobile, seat of the famous Borghese Gallery. In the square in front of the main entrance, there are two small symmetrical fountains, the **Fountains of the Masks**, placed at the ends of the balustrade that surround it. Made in the 17th century and based on a drawing by Vasanzio, they were sold along with the entire balustrade in 1895 to an American collector who moved them to England. The faithful copies that have taken their place consist of a square base attached to the balustrade on one side



Fountain of the Masks



Fountain of the Seahorses

and decorated with three large masks on the other three, and from which water comes out and falls into three small basins connected to each other in such a way as to form the shape of a seashell. The water then falls into the lower part where it is channeled into a small basin inserted in the ground. In the upper part, two pedestals decorated with eagles and dragons, symbols of the Borghese family, support two sculptures. Proceeding along Viale del Museo Borghese, you will find the two **Dark Fountains**, made around 1620. Placed on the sides of the street, they are quite similar although the one on the right, toward via Pinciana, has a round perimeter, the one on the left an oval shape. In both of them, an elegant stem rises from the basin and supports two smaller concentric cups. A marble and peperino seat runs around the two basins that used to be decorated with ancient statues, now lost. At one time the fountains were surrounded by thick vegetation with tall hedges. The

shade they produced made the fountains seem “dark”, an ideal place for pleasant stops and retreats during promenades.

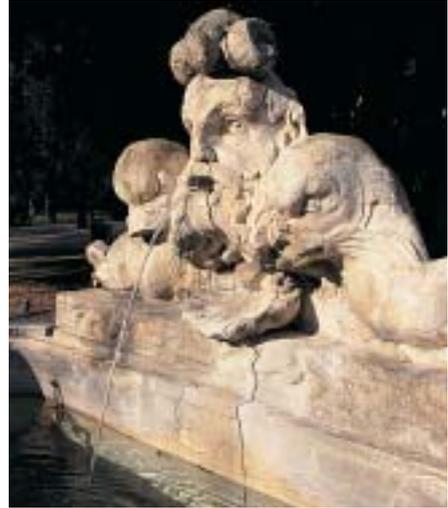
Briefly after the intersection of Viale del Museo Borghese with Viale dei Cavalli Marini, you will find the **Fountain of the Seahorses**. It dates back to the end of the 18th century, when Prince Marcantonio IV Borghese commissioned the architect Antonio Asprucci to renovate the villa and update its decor to the taste of the period. The fountain was designed in 1791 by the painter Cristoforo Unterpergher, from the northern Italy, who was also involved in the redecorating of the main Casino. Placed at the centre of an intersection, it consists of a large round basin at ground level outlined by small pilasters that don't obstruct the view of the surroundings. At the centre, four seahorses carved by Luigi Salimei, support a composition with three concentric circular basins from which water gushes forth.

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The seahorses, half horse and half fish, are a symbol of strength and vitality, and their wings refer to the mythological horse Pegasus.

Continuing along Via dei Pupazzi past the Tempietto di Diana, you arrive in Via Goethe and the **Fountain of the Winged Victories**. Made in the early 20th century, the basin of the fountain is actually an ancient Roman sarcophagus that represents winged Victories among garlands of fruit and ornamental masks. The large mask from which water spurts and flanked by dolphins was instead made by Giacomo della Porta at the end of the 16th century, along with other similar elements, to adorn the fountain in Piazza della Rotonda in front of the Pantheon. At the end of the 19th century, the four masks were substituted with copies, and deposited in the city warehouses; only one of them was later moved to the Villa Borghese, where we can still enjoy it.

At the end of Via Goethe you can turn right into Via Canonica with the **Garden of the Lake** on the right, one of the most successful transformations of the park in the 18th century. Antonio



Fountain of the Winged Victories

Asprucci, with the help of the landscape artist Jacob More, created a setting inspired by the Romantic English garden, with more spontaneous vegetation. The rigid 17th century schemes, with walls around the different sections and avenues arranged according to perspective, were eliminated in favour of winding paths almost hidden in the thickness of the trees. An artifi-



Garden of the Lake and Temple of Esculapius

cial lake, with irregular banks and imitation jagged rocks, was created with the purpose of emphasizing the natural character of the place. The lake's most particular feature is the **Temple of Esculapius**, a small building in the Ionic style constructed between 1785 and 1792 by Antonio Asprucci and Cristoforo Unterpergher. An inscription in Greek dedicated to the god of medicine, Esculapius, runs along the trabeation. On the tympanum, instead, is the representation of the moment in which the god's sacred snake, brought to Rome from Epidaurus to put an end to the terrible plague of 291 BC, landed on the island in the Tiber. At the sides of the temple, two large statues of nymphs stand on false rocks. The temple is on a little island which could be reached by a small bridge at the back or by row boat. It is still possible to rent small row boats for romantic outings on the lake, which was considered one of the most

attractive features of the park already in the 19th century. The Roman poet Gioacchino Belli composed a sonnet in which he described the festive atmosphere of the park that being open to the public, had become one of the favourite places of the Romans. *"Then you go to the lake and the park, and everywhere you will find people eating, playing ball, running around and shouting"*.

Shortly before arriving at the lake, in an opening on the right, you will find the **Fountain of the Masks** and the four little **Fountains of the Tritons**, placed here in the early 20th century. Both the tritons and the ornamental masks are 16th century works by Giacomo della Porta, for the fountain on the southern side of Piazza Navona to which Bernini added the famous Moor in the mid 17th century. In 1874 they were removed from their original location, were substituted with copies and eventually reused to adorn the



Fountain of the Satyrs or Joyous Fount

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fountains in Villa Borghese. In the new composition they were put together differently than in Piazza Navona. The four tritons kneeling on the valve of a seashell as they blow through the conch, were placed at the corners of the open space, on simple semicircular basins. The four masks instead, were placed on a central fountain, consisting of a mixtilinear basin with an ancient granite tub at its centre. At present the structure lacks its most precious decorative elements which have been recently removed, probably to protect them from vandalism. Almost opposite, on the left side of Via del Lago, you will find the small graceful **Fountain of the Satyrs**, made in 1929 by the sculptor Giovanni Nicolini. Also known as

the Joyful Fountain or the Fountain of the Rabbits, it is made up of a cylindrical base on which four rabbit heads alternate with an inscription in Latin that reads: *fons canit vitae laudem murmure suo* (with its murmuring the spring sings its hymn to life). Above it, an extremely refined bronze sculpture shows two satyrs, male and female, holding their little son in their arms.

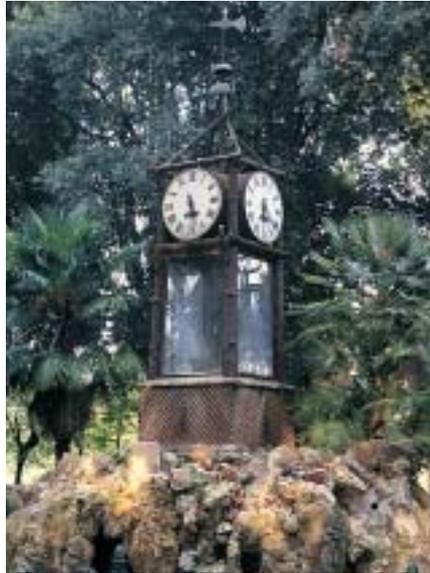
On the left of the lake you can walk down Via Esculapio that ends in Piazzale del Fiocco, dominated by the **Fountain of Esculapius** or **Fountain of the Ribbon**. The composition was made during the third phase of work on the park, promoted by Prince

Camillo Borghese starting from 1824 and entrusted to the architect Luigi Canina. The complex structure blends a series of heterogeneous elements - architecture, sculpture, rock, vegetation and water - that render the whole both harmonious and scenographic. On the upper part, on a rocky support,

stands a triumphal arch with a single opening that contains a statue of Esculapius with the traditional attribute of a snake. The eagle, heraldic symbol of the Borghese family, and two statues adorn the top of the arch. At the front, water spurts from a circular basin on a pedestal.

Continue along Viale Fiorello La Guardia and turn right into Viale delle Magnolie that ends by the bridge made in

1908 to connect Villa Borghese with the **Promenade of the Pincio**. The area was considered ideal by the ancient Romans to build luxurious villas known for their splendid gardens, and was chosen by Napoleon for the Promenade publique, a park intended for the walks and strolls of the Roman people. A reflection of the ideals of post-revolutionary France in its strong social character, it was considered absolutely necessary in Rome, designated as the second capital of the Empire. Designed by the French architect Berthault, a specialist of the genre, the garden was supposed to be named Jardin du Grand César, in honour of Napoleon.



Fountain of the Clock

After the collapse of the Napoleonic empire in 1814 Pope Pius VII Chiramonti commissioned Giuseppe Valadier to continue all the same.

Coming from Villa Borghese, immediately on your right you will find Via dell'Orologio, named after the



Aerial view of the Garden of the Lake

Fountain of the Clock. The small artificial lake, surrounded by an iron fence, has a rocky formation and the centre with lush vegetation and a water clock. Presented at the Universal Exhibition in Paris in 1867, the hydrochronometer (the correct scientific term for it) was created and built by the Dominican priest Giambattista Embriaco. It consists of a small wooden tower with a clock face on each of the four sides of the upper part and glass in the lower section to show the mechanism. A small jet of water falls alternatively in the little bowls on the left and right of a balance wheel making it swing, thus putting the whole mechanism in motion. A small wooden bridge connecting the bank of the pond with the rocky island at its centre was added for the upkeep of the clock. Proceed in the direction of Piazzale Napoleone I up to the **Fountain of**

Moses. A sculpture of a female figure kneeling in front of a basket with a baby in it, was placed at the centre of the wide circular basin in 1868. It represents the moment in which Moses, condemned to be killed like all the Jewish male babies by order of the pharaoh, was abandoned in the Nile by his mother and found by the pharaoh's daughter who had him educated at court. The statue is placed on a rock from which water gushes out in three spurts and adorned with thick papyrus plants that evoke an Egyptian setting. Having reached Piazzale Napoleone I that offers one of the most beautiful views of Rome, you can turn left for Viale del Belvedere and continue along Viale Trinità dei Monti until you arrive at the **Fountain of Viale della Trinità dei Monti**, in front of Villa Medici. Although it is very simple, the fountain is one of the most elegant and admired in the city. Commissioned by cardinal Ferdinando de' Medici in 1589, the architect Annibale Lippi created an octagonal basin at ground level in which an octagonal base supports an ancient circular granite basin. At the centre, water spurts from a cannon ball with a peculiar origin. According to tradition, Queen Christina of Sweden, whose bizarre behaviour never ceased to surprise the Romans during the thirty-four years of her stay in Rome, actually fired it herself from the Castel Sant'Angelo in 1656. Being dreadfully late for an appointment at Villa

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Medici with the painter Charles Erard, the eccentric queen chose this unusual manner of making her presence felt.

The itinerary ends at the foot of the famous Spanish Steps with the **Fountain of the Barcaccia** (meaning “ugly old boat”).

Commissioned by Pope Urban VIII Barberini, the fountain was erected between 1627 and 1629 by Pietro Bernini, who probably availed himself of the precious advice of his son Gian Lorenzo. Contemporaries referred to it as a “quaint fancy” but did not fail to notice its originality, due to the fact that for the first time there was a travertine boat instead of the customary round or mixtilinear basin.

The oval pool in fact, contains precisely a “barcaccia”, that is, a barge used for the transportation of barrels of wine along the banks of the river Tiber. It seems that the idea for the structure, placed at a level lower than

the street because of the low pressure of the Virgo Aqueduct at that point, came from the recollection of a barge that remained stranded in the square during the great flood of 1598. Its prow and stern are identical and its sides are very low to facilitate loading and unloading but give the impression that the boat is about to sink. The exterior is decorated with two large coats of arms of the pope, with the bee symbol of the family and two false cannon mouths from which water pours into the pool below.

On the inside water spurts in a fan shape from two suns, another Barberini symbol. It was wittily remarked that “ships are provided with metallic instruments of war and spit iron and fire, whereas this marble one, built by the pope as if it floated, does not spread flames or cannon balls but water, that is to say waves of honey, from the winged insects that produce it”.



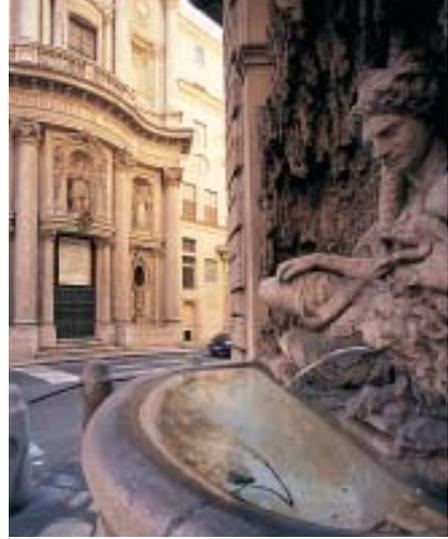
Fountain of the Barcaccia and Trinità dei Monti in the background



Trevi Fountain

FROM QUATTRO FONTANE TO QUIRINAL

At the intersection between Via Quattro Fontane, Via del Quirinale and Via XX Settembre, against the beveled corners of the buildings, stand the **Four Fountains** ordered by Pope Sixtus V, Felice Peretti, in the late 16th century. They were intended as stage scenery for the new crossing resulting from the opening of the *Strada Felice*, the present Via Quattro Fontane, that intersected the preexisting *Strada Pia*, now Via del Quirinale. The *Strada Felice* was designed by Domenico Fontana and built by the same Pope Sixtus V to connect the basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore with Trinità dei Monti. The view from this point is one of the most impressive in Rome: from here it is in fact possible to see the three ancient obelisks that rise in Piazza dell'Esquilino, Piazza Trinità dei Monti and Piazza del Quirinale. The fountains, on the other hand, are certainly not among the most beautiful in the city. Perhaps because they were not executed by first rate workmen, they are not on the level of Fontana's project. The fountains represent two river gods and two female goddesses reclining and placed in niches that originally simulated grottoes. The river *Tiber* is situated on the corner of the San Carlino complex, and can be recognized by the she-wolf approaching from the right. On the left corner lies the *Arno* with a lion, symbol of Florence. The other fountains represent *Diana* with a dog, and *Juno* with a peacock. At number 13 of the nearby Via Quattro Fontane, you will find one of the entrances to **Palazzo Barberini**, seat of the National Gallery of Ancient Art. This imposing and elegant building was erected in the 17th century above the ruins of the ancient Villa Sforza, for the family of Pope Urban VIII. Numerous architects participated in its construction, the most noteworthy being Carlo

*Fountain of Juno*

Maderno, Francesco Borromini, Gian Lorenzo Bernini and Pietro da Cortona. The garden at the front contains the fountain created by Francesco Azzurri in the 19th century, along with the monumental railing used as a background in a famous scene of the film "Roman Holiday" with Audrey Hepburn, and has large travertine pilasters decorated with telamons sculpted by Adamo Tadolini and surmounted by vases and the coat of arms of the Barberini family. **The fountain is in the shape of a candlestick** and consists of an octagonal basin with a shaft supporting a circular basin decorated with three bees from the Barberini coat of arms.

In the nearby Piazza Barberini stands the baroque **Fountain of the Triton**. Executed in travertine by Gian Lorenzo Bernini around 1643, the fountain is without a doubt one of the most beautiful in the city, especially for the naturalism with which the artist represented the sea monster, half man and half fish, seated on the valves of an open seashell. The

triton has a powerful physical build and is shown blowing through a conch (a spiral-shaped seashell) from which, instead of sound, water pours forth and falls into the basin below. The sea god, son of Neptune and Amphitrite, used to be invoked to calm the waves after a storm, as described by Ovid in the *Metamorphoses* (1st century AD): “*The rage of the sea abated, the god of the oceans calmed the waters, put down his trident and summoned the blue-green Triton, looming above the waters, his shoulders encrusted with seashells, and ordered him to blow his resounding horn to signal to the rivers and waves to retreat.*”

Wet-bearded Triton took the hollow, twisted conch that from its tip

widens into a spiral, the conch that, blown in the middle of the sea, can be heard from shore to shore. Even then, when he obeyed the order and set lip to his horn sounding the retreat, all the waters of the lands and seas heard and all obeyed returning to their beds”.

The beautiful plastic composition and the two family coats of arms are supported by four dolphins with open jaws emerging from the low four-lobed basin. The fountain is fed by the Felix Aqueduct, whose delivery capacity was increased by 60,000,000 litres to allow the spurt of water to be very high, higher than it is today. At present the fountain is provided with a recycling system, contributed by the national gas compa-

ny, Italgas, that filters the water and prevents foreign elements from damaging the sculpture.

In Piazza Barberini, at the corner with Via Veneto, stands another fountain built by the Barberini family in the 17th century, the **Fountain of the Bees**. Gian Lorenzo Bernini received the com-



Fountain of the Triton

mission from Urban VIII just a few days after the splendid Fountain of the Triton at the centre of the square was completed. Originally intended as a simple drinking trough for horses, it was meant to be placed, as was customary, to the side of the monumental fountain. It was executed in 1644 in white Carrara marble and set against Palazzo Soderini at the beginning of Via Sistina and removed in 1867

because it blocked traffic. Stored in one of the municipal warehouses in Testaccio, until January 1916, it was reassembled in the present location by the sculptor Adolfo Apolloni, with the few original fragments that had survived the dismantling. The fountain was rebuilt in travertine without considering Bernini's original and ingenious 17th century design. The present structure consists of the valve of an open seashell, resting on rocks and forming the basin, fed by water coming out of the spouts, surmounted by three bees. The inscription recalls Pope Urban VIII and, in the last line, the XXI (twenty-first) year of his reign in which the fountain was executed. Actually, Bernini was away from

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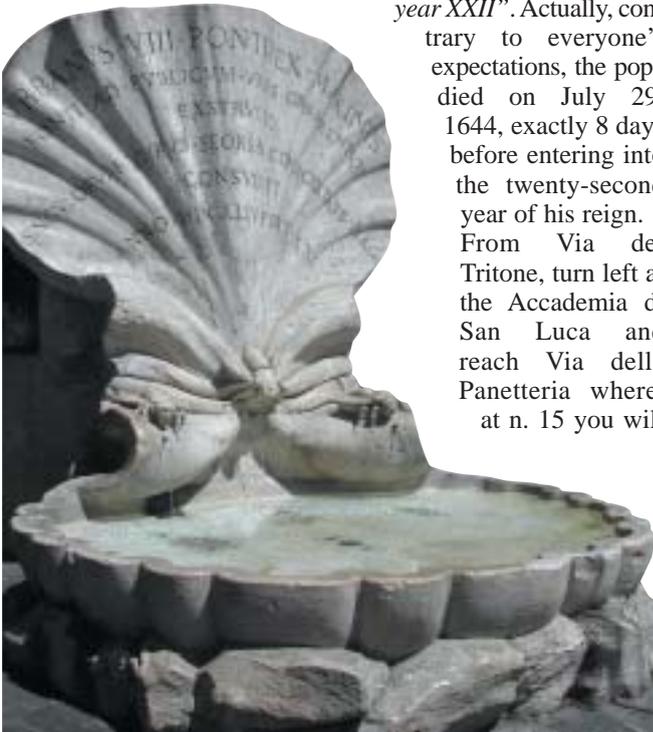
Rome when the fountain was completed and during its summer inauguration, and had asked the stone-cutter to indicate the XXII (twenty-second) year of Pope Urban VIII's reign on the epigraph, which was carved in June. The anticipation of the anniversary date which was really to be celebrated in August, was interpreted maliciously by the Romans as clear evidence of the airs of grandeur put on by the family. The event occasioned the pasquinade "*The Barberini having sucked up the entire world, proceeded to suck up time as well*", referring to the fact that large portions of their property were acquired by subtracting public works from the people. The pope's nephew had the last number on the Roman numeral erased in the hopes of appeasing the population that was fed up with having all those public fountains and no water in their homes. Nonetheless, criticism did not subside and, as a Roman diarist relates, the stone-cutter "*left the carved number XXI, as if, according to many, he wished the pope never to reach the year XXII*". Actually, contrary to everyone's expectations, the pope died on July 29, 1644, exactly 8 days before entering into the twenty-second year of his reign.

From Via del Tritone, turn left at the Accademia di San Luca and reach Via della Panetteria where, at n. 15 you will

find the facade of **Palazzo Antamoro**. Purchased in the 18th century by the noble family after whom it was named, the palace was built in the 17th century by Paolo Strada, the secret valet of the cardinal Giulio Rospigliosi, future Pope Clement IX. An unknown architect designed the building and work was completed with funds provided by the cardinal to Strada, who showed his gratitude by placing the Rospigliosi coat of arms on the fountain in the courtyard. Designed by Gian Lorenzo Bernini in 1669, the fountain has three basins and two tritons blowing through conches out of which water pours into the underlying bowl in the shape of a shell. Two dolphins emerge from a rock and support a basin beyond which the coat of arms of the Antamoro family has substituted the original one of the Rospigliosi. Although not well known, this fountain in full baroque taste, with the natural setting reproduced in the background and the tritons virtuously committed to supporting the coat of arms, can be considered the epitome of the Fountain of the Tritons created by Gian Lorenzo Bernini at the height of his fame.

Return to Piazza dell'Accademia di San Luca and to Via del Tritone, then reach Via del Nazareno. Right by building n. 9/a, below street level, lie the remains of the **Virgo Aqueduct**, the only ancient one that has remained virtually unchanged through the centuries. Built at the time of the Emperor Augustus, the aqueduct still provides water to the fountains of Trevi, Piazza Navona and Piazza di Spagna, and its subterranean section can actually be navigated by boat. The springs of the aqueduct, ordered by Marcus Agrippa for his bath complex in the Campus Martius, were located in the Agro Lucullano, at the eighth mile of the Via Collatina in the area known today as

Fountain of the Bees



Salone. After a long subterranean tract, the conduit surfaced near the modern Via Due Macelli from which, through a series of arches, it reached Via del Nazareno. What can still be partially seen corresponds to the upper section of three arches of travertine blocks in ashlar-work, framed by semi-columns and surmounted by the attic with an inscription referring to the restoration promoted by the Emperor Claudius in the 1st century AD. From Piazza dell'Accademia di San Luca, proceed along Via della Stamperia and reach Piazza di Trevi, setting



Trevi Fountain

of the most celebrated fountain in the world: **Trevi Fountain**. Built between 1732 and 1762 according to a project by Nicola Salvi, it was conceived as a large monument set against a preexisting building and consisting of a rich and animated decoration in addition to the basin. Actually, all the architectural and decorative elements scenically frame the water that gushes and collects in the large basin representing the sea. The basin itself is located below street level because the small size of the square would not have otherwise allowed the construction of such a large fountain. Water is provided to the fountain by the Virgo Aqueduct, named after the legendary appearance of a young girl who indicated the spring to some thirsty soldiers. The large architectural backdrop simulates a Roman triumphal arch on which the inscriptions recall the names

of the popes who financed the construction. Crowning the attic and supported by symbolic representations of Fame, is the coat of arms of Pope Clement XII Corsini who commissioned the fountain. The four allegorical figures set against the balustrade probably represent the seasons. The bas-reliefs below the cornice represent episodes of *Marcus Agrippa supervising work on the construction of Virgo Aqueduct* on the left, and of the *Virgin indicating the spring to the soldiers* on the right. In the lower part, at the centre, stands the majestic figure of *Ocean*, personification of water, accompanied by tritons and sea horses pulling a chariot in the shape of the valve of a seashell. Around them, pools and basins overflowing with water, recreate a natural setting. In the niches on the sides stand the personifi-

The culture of water

Roma

cations of *Abundance* on the left and *Health* on the right. Water, forcefully gushing from the rocks into the basin below, is the real protagonist of the site. In spite of the petrified vegetation derived from Bernini's creations, its movement, the sound of which is audible already in the nearby streets, exalts Nature's constant flow in an incessant play of dynamic effects.

The walk ends in **Piazza del Quirinale** where the mighty statues of the **Dioscuri** rise at the sides of an obelisk. In all probability, the statues originally came from the nearby temple of Serapis, built by Caracalla in the 3rd century AD. They were successively moved to the Baths of Constantine erected on the Quirinal in the 4th century and their constant presence in the area eventually caused the hill itself to be named Monte Cavallo. Restored heavily on numerous occasions, the statues represent the *Dioscuri Castor and Pollux holding chafing horses by their bridle*, and were moved by Pope Sixtus V Peretti at the end of the 16th century to adorn the sides of a marble octagonal fountain intended

as a backdrop for the street, now Via XX Settembre, in correspondence to Porta Pia at the opposite end.

During the reign of Sixtus V, the names of Phydias and Praxiteles were erroneously indicated as the authors of the statues in the inscriptions carved on their bases. In 1784 the statues were placed in their present location, at the centre of the square and on the sides of the obelisk from the Mausoleum of Augustus in the Campus Martius. In 1818 Pope Pius VII Chiaramonti had the preceding fountain substituted with the beautiful basin brought from the Roman Forum where it had been placed in 1593 by Giacomo Della Porta to be used as a drinking trough for cattle. The great archeologist Rodolfo Lanciani relates how during the 19th century, before it was moved to the Quirinal, cart drivers passing through the Forum area, known at the time as Campo Vaccino (Cow Pasture), "*would cross the basin with their vehicles to spare themselves the nuisance of wetting their wheels in the summer heat*".



Fountain of the Dioscuri at the Quirinal



Maderno's Fountain in St. Peter's Square

FROM PONTE SISTO TO ST. PETER'S SQUARE

*Ponte Sisto*

Ponte Sisto was the first bridge in Rome to be built by a pope after the ones erected in antiquity. It is named after Pope Sixtus IV Della Rovere who restructured an ancient Roman bridge, known as the pons *Antoninus* or *Aurelius*, on occasion of the Jubilee of 1475. The ancient structure was built in 147 AD by the Emperor Antoninus Pius, perhaps by using the remains of another bridge constructed earlier by Agrippa. Restored numerous times in the course of the centuries, the bridge definitively collapsed during the terrible flood of 792, acquiring the name of *Pons Ruptus* (Broken Bridge) or *Fractus* (Fractured).

The new structure, erected *ex-novo* beginning in 1473 is curved in a shape known as “donkey’s back”. It consists of four wide arches in tufa, travertine and brickwork, and is supported by three strong pillars. The central pillar has a large circular opening, the “occhialone”, for the downflow of water, used for centuries by the Romans as a hydrometer: if the Tiber flowed through the hole it

meant the safety high water mark had been exceeded. The architect who designed the bridge is traditionally held to be Baccio Pontelli, although there is no proof. Despite various interventions to reinforce it, the bridge maintained its original appearance until 1877, when its carriage way was widened. The old parapets were eliminated to make room for two suspended cast iron sidewalks that disfigured it. They were fortunately removed in the course of an elaborate restoration process promoted by the Municipality of Rome beginning in 1998 which succeeded in returning the bridge to its original Renaissance aspect.

Piazza Trilussa is located by the bridgehead towards Trastevere and is dominated by the fountain commonly known as **Fontanone di Ponte Sisto**.

When it was inaugurated by Pope Paul V Borghese in 1613, the fountain stood on the opposite bank of the river, against the facade of the Beggars Hospital. At the end of the 16th century the complex had been founded by Pope Sixtus V at

the extremity of via Giulia as a back-drop. Unfortunately the construction of the embankments of the Lungotevere caused the practically total destruction of the hospital. The fountain instead was dismantled and reassembled in its present location, no longer against a building but free standing, in 1898. This solution enhanced its simple and functional shape, probably designed by Giovanni Vasanzio. The deeply recessed niche, flanked by

two columns set against ashlar-work masonry, has a small basin in the upper section from which water pours into the wider basin below. At the top, the inscription surmounted by the Borghese coat of arms celebrates Pope Paul V, who brought water to this area of the city by restoring the Aqueduct of Trajan. A lovely walk through the picturesque alleys of Trastevere will lead you to the main

square of the district, **Piazza Santa Maria in Trastevere**, where you will find one of the most ancient fountains in the city. Its existence is documented with certainty from 1471, but it may have actually been made for the Jubilee of 1450, in substitution of a medieval fount. It originally consisted of a polygonal basin surmounted by two round ones, but it was restored and modified numerous times over the centuries.

The fountain's output of water was initially very slight owing to the lack of a regular supply. The problem was solved only in 1658, when Pope Alexander VII Chigi decided that it should be fed by the

Acqua Paola. On that occasion, Gian Lorenzo Bernini was to be asked to be in charge of the works and the octagonal basin was entirely redone and elevated. Four double seashells were added to collect the water gushing from four bronze "bocche di lupo" (wolf mouths), belonging to the old fountain. By the end of the 17th century, Bernini's shells had already deteriorated and were substituted with new ones designed by the architect Carlo Fontana.

Even so, the fountain you see today is the result of a total reconstruction dating from 1873 that maintained the 17th century aspect but utilized gray bardiglio marble instead of the traditional travertine. On the octagonal basin, four inscriptions sum up the fountain's complex history.

Along Via della Scala, before reaching Porta Settimiana, turn into Via Garibaldi that will take you to the top



Piazza S.Maria in Trastevere

of the Janiculum hill to see the famous "Fontanone" which is actually the monumental fountain placed at the end of the conduits of the **Traiano Paolo Aqueduct**. Starting from 1608, in order to provide an adequate water supply to the western section of the city, Pope Paul V Borghese promoted the difficult task of restoring the aqueduct of Trajan. Built in 109 AD by the Emperor Trajan, the aqueduct was fed by the Vicarello springs near the lake of Bracciano, and reached the top of the Janiculum in correspondence to today's Porta San Pancrazio. Its total course covered 57 kilometres, partially underground and partially above



The Fontanone on the Janiculum

ground, on elevated arches. Cut by the Goths under Vitigis in 537, the aqueduct was restored numerous times during the Middle Ages, but only at the time of Paul V were the ancient conduits almost entirely redone. The project was entrusted to the architect Giovanni Fontana, an expert in hydraulics, in collaboration with Flaminio Ponzio, who designed the fountain where the aqueduct ended its course on the Janiculum. The architectural structure of the fountain clearly recalls the Fountain of Moses in Piazza San Bernardo erected by Pope Sixtus V in 1585, although the lack of proportion and the clumsiness so evident there were corrected. It was inspired by ancient Roman triumphal arches and presents three large central openings flanked by two others smaller in size. Six columns from the old basilica of St. Peter were

placed in between the arches, whereas the rest of the material was taken from the Roman Forum. The central arches have three large windows that originally offered a glimpse of the lush vegetation of the garden at the back producing a lovely effect. The animated upper section is decorated with two colossal figures of Winged Fame by the Milanese sculptor Ippolito Buzio, placed on the sides of the coat of arms of Pope Paul V. Inaugurated in 1612, the fountain was substantially modified in 1690, when Carlo Fontana substituted the five small basins beneath each arch with a single basin that widens at the centre. Having returned to Porta Settimiana, continue along Via della Lungara up to Largo Cristina di Svezia and the entrance to the **Botanical Garden** (06.49917107). Since 1883, this important university institution has been



Fountain of the Tritons

housed in the area previously occupied by the historic gardens of Palazzo Corsini of which large sections still existed. The gardens were known already in the 16th century and were widely restored by the architect Ferdinando Fuga in 1741. In his lovely scenographic layout of the slope of the Janiculum, Fuga also included the beautiful **Fountain of the Tritons** where a high jet of water spouts from two travertine tritons on a rock placed in a quatrefoil basin.

In line with this charming fountain, Fuga designed an avenue that leads uphill to a monumental staircase with three ramps. At the centre of the last ramp stands the **Fountain of the 11 Jets**.

Made up of a series of six staggered cups from which eleven jets of water spout, the fountain recalls famous examples such as the “Boiling Fountain” in the Villa D’Este in Tivoli and the “Water Staircase” in the

Villa Aldobrandini in Frascati.

Continuing along Via della Lungara, past Piazza della Rovere, you will reach the **Santo Spirito in Sassia Hospital**.

Founded in the 8th century, the hospital was entirely rebuilt by Pope Sixtus IV. The members of religious orders, monks and nuns, who worked in the institution, were provided with two separate structures arranged around two cloisters. Enter into the “cloister of the nuns” by passing through the hospital building to see the graceful **Fountain of the Dolphins**. It was built towards the middle of the 16th century and is named after the four dolphins that support the circular basin with masks.

Attached to the hospital complex is the **Palace of the Commendatore**, built in 1562 as a residence for the head of the organization of the institute. Passing through Borgo Santo Spirito, you can

The culture of water **Roma**

look into the courtyard and catch a glimpse of a charming fountain set against the wall at the far end in 1677. Made in 1614, under Pope Paul V to adorn the Vatican, it was removed during the construction of the colonnade in St. Peter's square. The elaborate fountain is decorated with seashells, masks, grotesques and pensile basins and placed in a niche encrusted with coloured pebbles.

Continuing through Borgo Santo Spirito, reach **St. Peter's Square**, and the two practically identical fountains standing on the sides of the elliptical colonnade designed by Bernini.

Since 1490, a fountain made up of two circular basins had stood in front of the old basilica of St. Peter. In 1614, following restoration by Carlo Maderno which gave it its present aspect, it was fed by the Acqua Paola. When Pope Alexander VII Chigi asked Gian Lorenzo Bernini to design the new elliptical square, was moved to the left

side. Only in 1675 was the second fountain, made by the architect Carlo Fontana under the supervision of Bernini, placed on the other side of the square in perfect axis and almost identical in shape to the first one. Both consist of a large mixtilinear basin with an octagonal pedestal supporting a round basin. The pedestal of the fountain on the right shows the coat of arms of Pope Paul V Borghese and re-utilized the ancient granite basin of the 15th century fountain. The one on the left instead bears the coat of arms of Pope Clement X Altieri and its circular basin was made newly in travertine. Both have a stem at the centre with four spirals supporting the second basin made of a single block of granite, the surface of which is carved in large scales, and with the concave part facing down. In this way, the water gushing from the seven spouts creates a multitude of splashes and refracts the light with a lovely effect.



St. Peter's Square viewed from the dome



Fountain of the Turtles in Piazza Mattei

FROM PONTE PALATINO TO CAMPIDOGLIO

*Piazza del Campidoglio*

The itinerary starts from the **Palatine Bridge**, erected in 1886 by Angelo Vescovali in place of the nearby dilapidated **Emilius Bridge**, the first stone bridge built in Rome. Dating from the 2nd century BC, it was destroyed many times by the pressure of the river. Reconstructed in 1575 by Pope Gregory XIII Boncompagni, whose coat of arms is visible on the only surviving arch, the structure was demolished again by the disastrous flood of 1598 and rebuilt with wooden trusses. In the 19th century an iron bay was added to the two surviving ancient arches before being eliminated during the construction of the new Palatine Bridge. The Emilius Bridge is little more than a ruin today and the Romans casually refer to it as the Broken Bridge.

From the Palatine Bridge, facing the left embankment of the Tiber, it is possible to see the outlet into the river of the **Cloaca Maxima**, the largest conduit for drainage of waste water ever created by

the Romans. Built according to tradition at the end of the 7th century BC by Tarquinius Priscus, the Cloaca was originally a simple open-air channel used to reclaim the marshy area of the Roman Forum. Restored in the 3rd century and still partially functioning today, the conduit started its course in the Suburra, the lower-class neighbourhood at the foot of the Esquiline. From there it passed beneath the Forum of Nerva and the Roman Forum, reached the Velabro and ended in the Tiber in correspondence to the Emilius Bridge (now the Broken Bridge). The outlet shows a round arch and three arched lintels in peperino stone inserted in a wall of tufa blocks from Grotta Oscura. Unfortunately, it isn't possible to see the channel that runs about ten metres below the present street level and measures an average three metres in height and width. Referring to this magnificent work, in the 6th century *Cassiodorus* wrote: "Which city can compete with Rome in what is above



Fountain of the Tritons

ground if what is below the ground is beyond comparison?"

In the lovely setting of the nearby Piazza della Bocca della Verità, dominated by the church and the elegant round temple dedicated to Hercules the Victor, stands the **Fountain of the Tritons**, designed by Carlo Bizzaccheri in 1717. The large basin has a peculiar octagonal shape intended by the architect as a tribute to the pope who commissioned the work: Clement XI Albani whose coat of arms bears an eight-pointed star in addition to hills. Bizzaccheri had the sculptor Filippo Bai carve the central group above travertine blocks emerging from the basin. Two tritons are supported by these rocks clearly recalling those designed by Bernini for the Fountain of the Four Rivers in Piazza Navona. The tritons are represented from the back, their intertwined tails supporting the large basin in the shape of an open seashell. The basin is decorated with undulated borders and lines and shows two large coats of arms of the Albani pope in which the heraldic "hills", also terminate in the upper part, where the water spurts out.

At the same time, Bizzaccheri designed another structure to be used as a drinking trough by the herds of cattle present in the city at the time. When the "Lungotevere" was built, the trough, the only one left in Rome, was moved to the nearby Lungotevere Aventino, where it can still be seen. The Forum Boarium also contains the **Temple** known as **Fortuna Virilis**, built in the 4th century BC near the river port, the *portus Tiberinus*. The rectangular-shaped temple was dedicated to *Portunus*, patron god of river access and sea commerce; it was restored in the 1st century BC, when it acquired the aspect it maintains to this day.

The building is elevated on a brickwork podium covered with slabs of travertine. The Ionic columns of the atrium and at the corners of the cella are also in travertine, whereas the semi-columns and the rest of the structure are in tufa from the Aniene quarries, with the bases and the capitals in stuccoed travertine. The temple was transformed into a church already in the 9th century and is almost



Temple of the Fortuna Virilis

entirely preserved with the exception of the staircase at the front that dates from a modern reconstruction.

From the Lungotevere you can reach the **Island in the Tiber** that, by facilitating the crossing of the river with planks and makeshift bridges, had a fundamental role in the city's development since its earliest days.

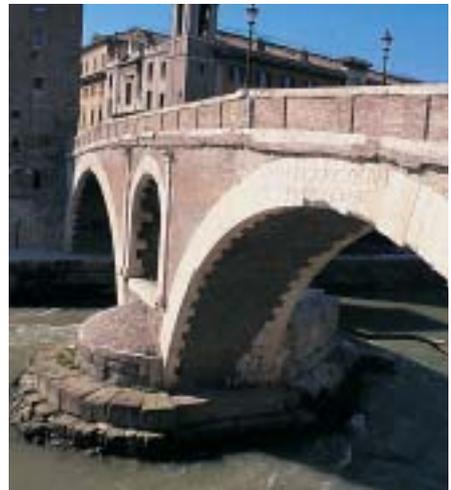


Island in the Tiber

On the right side, the island is connected to the mainland by the Cestius bridge (46 BC), on the left side by the Fabricius bridge, the most ancient Roman bridge (62 BC). According to tradition, this volcanic island dates back to the 6th century BC. Its peculiar shape resembling a ship, was actually man-made to recall the vessel that brought to Rome the snake of Esculapius, the god of medicine, in the hopes of freeing the city from the plague. It was at this point that the snake is said to have jumped off the ship and where a temple dedicated to the god was built in later times. An obelisk placed at the centre of the island simulated the main mast of the ship, whereas the two bridges on the sides represented the moors.

Having left the Island in the Tiber by crossing the Fabricius Bridge, reach Piazza di Monte Savello, where the Portico of Octavia begins. From here, follow Via San' Ambrogio or Via Reginella to Piazza Mattei to see the **Fountain of the Turtles**, one of the most loved by the Romans. It was made between 1581 and 1588 by Giacomo Della Porta and Taddeo Landini who executed the sculptures representing four bronze youths balan-

ced on four shells made of African marble. The young men were to have supported four dolphins, never actually made. During the restoration that took place in 1658, perhaps Gian Lorenzo Bernini himself added the turtles shown drinking from the upper basin. According to an urban legend, Duke Antonio Mattei lost his entire fortune gambling and was compelled to call off his wed-



Ponte Fabricio

ding to a beautiful and wealthy girl. To show his power even in financial disgrace, the duke had the fountain made over night and invited his future father-in-law and his daughter to the house of Giacomo Mattei where he resided. He asked them to look out of the window with the best view of the fountain and exclaimed: *"This is what a penniless Mattei can achieve in a few hours!"*. Naturally apologies were immediately made, the wedding took place and, in memory of that day, the duke had the window overlooking the square walled.

The small but elegant fountain is a true gem of Renaissance art; its lively figures, perfectly integrated in the surrounding space, anticipate the great season of Baroque art. From Piazza Mattei the walk continues along Via dei Funari, through Piazza Lovatelli and then to **Piazza di Campitelli** where you will find a lovely but unknown fountain.

Designed by Giacomo della Porta in 1589 and executed by the stone-cutter Pompilio de Benedetti, the fountain originally stood at the centre of the square. In 1679, following the enlargement of the church of Santa Maria in Campitelli, Pope Innocent XI had it moved to its present location so that the shouts of the coach drivers who drove around it with their carriages wouldn't disturb mass. Commissioned by the families Capizzucchi, Muti, Albertoni and Ricci who owned the palaces in the square, the elegant fountain consists of

an octagonal base in travertine. The actual basin is placed above it and is also octagonal in shape, adorned with two masks with thick lips and donkey ears, in alternation with the coat of arms of the noble families, the Senate and the People of Rome who financed the work. A round basin from which water spurts, supported by a marble balustrade in the shape of a chalice decorated with garlands and festoons, forms the upper section of the fountain. At this point continue towards Piazza d'Aracoeli, by walking along Via Capiz-



Fountain in Piazza Campitelli

zucchi and Via Tribuna di Tor de'Specchi. On the left of the square, half-hidden by cars, you will find the **Fountain of the Ara Coeli** by Giacomo Della Porta, commissioned by Pope Sixtus V Peretti in 1589. Executed by Andrea Brasca, Pietro Gucci and Pace Naldini, the fountain was restored numerous times, especially under Pope Alexander VII Chigi and Clement XI Albani. After the construction of the Victor Emmanuel Monument and the consequential relocation of the monuments in the square, the two steps at the base of the ancient basin of the original fountain that repeated the shape of the basin in the form of an elongated quatrefoil, were lost. The present fountain has a marble basin containing a travertine cube decorated with masks and garlands that in its turn supports a chalice in travertine with the coat of arms of Pope Alexander VII. Another basin sustains four awkward cherubs



Fountain of the Goddess Rome

pouring water from their wineskins. From Piazza d'Aracoeli, the ramp designed by Michelangelo leads to the Campidoglio, the top of the Capitoline hill. At its base, in Via Teatro di Marcello, you can see the **Fountains of the Lions**. The two lions made of black basalt veined in red from Numidia, were taken from the temple of Isis and Serapis in the Campus Martius and donated by Pope Pius Medici to the Roman people to embellish the ramp of the Campidoglio. Not conceived as fountains, the lions were provided with bases only in 1582 and with water in 1587. According to tradition, on very special occasions, such as the election of Pope Innocent X Pamphilj and Clement X Altieri, the fountains spurted wine *“one red and the other white for the great joy of the people, men and women of all ages, who hurried there with cups and flasks to drink merrily, as others raced and elbowed their way to fill their stomachs and tankards”*.

The walk ends in the 16th century Piazza del Campidoglio where the **Fountain of the Goddess Rome** stands at the centre of the double staircase of Palazzo Senatorio. The niche designed by Michelangelo flanked by pilasters, con-

tains the ancient white marble and porphyry statue from the town of Cori representing a seated Minerva. Michelangelo had not included a fountain in the project for the new layout of the palazzo, perhaps because it was not possible to bring running water to the top of the hill. It was Matteo da Città di Castello

who gave the fountain its present aspect in 1588 and it was thus that the statue of Minerva was transformed into the goddess Rome, with a lance and a sphere, and two superimposed basins were added to collect water. The statues of the Tigris and the Nile from the baths of Constantine on the Quirinal hill were placed on the sides. The sculpture of the Nile on the left is recognizable by the sphinx and the cornucopia and was left untouched, whereas the Tigris on the right was transformed into the Tiber by adding the she-wolf and the twins Romulus and Remus, founders of the city.

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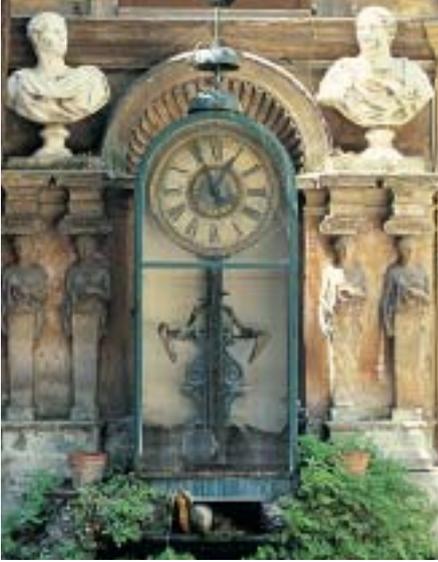


Fountains of the Lions



Piazza Navona

FROM VIA DEL GESÙ TO CAMPO DE' FIORI



Hydro-chronometer

The itinerary starts at n. 62 of Via del Gesù, at Palazzo Muti Cesi Berardi.

Erected in the 16th century by Giacomo della Porta, the palace has maintained its courtyard with the **hydro-chronometer**, or water clock, built in 1870 by the Dominican priest Giovanni Battista Embriaco.

The priest was born in Ceriana, near Sanremo, in 1829 and created other hydro-chronometers, like the monumental one in the Pincio gardens that was greatly admired by Napoleon III when it was taken to Paris for display in 1867. The clock is inserted in a charming setting made up of a niche culminating with a seashell. On the sides two caryatids support marble busts. In the lower part, a little seal in a bowl spurts water into the lower basin.

From Via del Gesù, passing by Piazza della Pigna, you will reach Via della Pigna where you can see remains of the **Baths of Agrippa** in the nearby Via dell'Arco della Ciambella. Agrippa, Emperor Augustus' son-in-law, built the

baths between 25 and 19 BC at the same time as the construction of the Aqueduct of the Virgo Aqueduct that, from the springs of Salone reached the city and fed the baths. Of the bath complex, the most ancient in Rome, only a section of the circular hall, originally covered by a dome measuring 35 metres in diameter, is still visible today. In the 17th century it was still standing and its "round" structure gave the street its name ("ciambella" is the Italian word for any ring-shaped object). The baths must have been sumptuously decorated with marble and statues, among them the famous bronze of the *Apoxyomenos* by Lysippus, an extraordinary work known only through the marble copy in the Vatican Museums. Along the western side of the complex, there also used to be the "Stagno di Agrippa", the Pool of Agrippa, a small artificial lake, like a pool, where the clients of the baths could go swimming. The Euripos, an open channel, flanked by benches and bridges to cross it, carried the water of the *Stagnum* to the Tiber.

From Via dell'Arco della Ciambella, passing through Via dei Cestari, reach Piazza della Minerva, dominated by the bare facade of the church on which numerous "**flood plaques**" indicate the level of the water during flooding of the



Flood plaques

Tiber. The most dramatic ones refer to 1598 (19.56 metres), 1530 (18.95), 1422 (17.32).

The nearby Piazza della Rotonda was named after the main structure of the **Pantheon**, and is adorned at the centre with a fountain commissioned in 1575 by Pope Gregory XIII Boncompagni and designed by Giacomo della Porta. The large basin in dull gray African marble has a peculiar multi-lobed shape and is decorated with four groups of masks and dolphins made in the 19th century in imitation of the originals carved by Leonardo Sormani in the 16th century and now in Villa Borghese. The fountain was enriched with a central rock supporting an Egyptian obelisk in 1711 when Filippo Barigioni restored it for Pope Clement XI Albani. The obelisk originated in Heliopolis at the time of Ramses II, and was brought to Rome by the Emperor Domitian who erected it in the Iseo Campense, where it was found in the 14th century.

In the close-by Via di Sant'Eustachio you will find some columns from the **Baths of Nero**, the second bath complex built in Rome after Agrippa's. Of the imposing structure, lavishly decorated, as Martial tells us in his verses, "*What was worse than Nero? And what was better than his baths?*", nothing has survived. Initially built before 64 AD and destroyed by a fire in 80 AD, the baths were rebuilt in the 3rd centu-

ry by the Emperor Alexander Severus who maintained the exact plan that for the first time in the history of architecture, saw the main rooms arranged along a central axis and the female and male sections symmetrically located on the two sides. To bring water to the new baths, Alexander Severus ordered the construction of the Alexandrian Aqueduct whose springs are near the town of Colonna, north of Rome. Following the



Fountain of the Books

cutting of the aqueduct under Witigis, the baths were abandoned and in the Middle Ages a church was actually built over the ruins. All that is left are two granite columns with white marble capitals set against the right side of the Church of Sant'Eustachio; two other columns from the same structure are now in the pronaos of the Pantheon where, in 1666, they replaced the seriously damaged originals. The splendid **granite basin** on a modern octagonal structure in the nearby **Via degli Staderari** also comes from the same source. In the same street you can see the small fountain of the Sant'Eustachio district, built in 1927. It is called **Fountain of the Books** because of its proximity to the complex of Sant'Ivo alla Sapienza, at one time the seat of the University of Rome, and is decorated with three volumes and a deer's head. From Via degli Staderari reach Corso Rinascimento, cross and arrive at **Piazza Navona** through the Corsia Agonale. This beautiful square extends over a surface of about 13,000 metres and is



Fountain of the Moor

decorated with three fountains along its longer axis. They were built for the first time in the 15th century as simple basins used as a watering place for animals and for activities connected with the market that had been moved there from the Capitoline in 1477. At the end of the 16th century, Pope Gregory XIII Boncompagni, after restoring the Virgo Aqueduct, decided to bring water into the square, which was then provided with larger fountains designed by Giacomo della Porta. The central basin remained as a watering place for horses. The two fountains by Della Porta initially consisted of a simple mixtilinear basin in “portasanta” marble, elevated on steps and surrounded by a balustrade in travertine to protect it from the impact of passing carriages and wagons. In the 17th century the fountains were modified by restoration: the one in front of the Brazilian Embassy was embellished with a statue representing a Triton struggling with a dolphin. The

fountain’s particular name of “Moor” derives from the particular facial features of the sea monster sculpted by Antonio Mari after a drawing by Gian Lorenzo Bernini.

The decoration was concluded by four tritons and four large ornamental masks, moved to the Garden of the Lake in Villa Borghese in the 19th century and replaced with copies by Luigi Amici.

On the northern side of the square you will find the Fountain of Neptune, initially called of the Calderari

because of its proximity to the workshops of the artisans who worked with copper. It remained bare until the 19th century when it was decorated with the statue of *Neptune struggling with an octopus*, by Antonio della Bitta and nereids, cherubs and seahorses by Gregorio Zappalà. Yet the most famous fountain in the square is the one at the centre. It was created by Gian Lorenzo Bernini for Pope Innocent X Pamphilj, who owned the palace on the left of the imposing Church of Saint Agnes. Inaugurated in 1651, the fountain represents the **Four Rivers** that stand for the four continents known at the time. In fact they represent the entire universe, dominated by the church of Rome, in the person of the pope, who is at its service. Certain heraldic elements referring to the Pamphilj family, such as the dove with the olive branch in its beak, are visible at the top of the obelisk, a symbol of sunlight. The statue of the



Fountain of the Rivers

Rio de la Plata, which stands for America, is in front of the church. According to tradition Bernini carved the arm of the statue lifted up to protect itself from the imminent collapse of the church that had been enlarged and reconstructed by his great rival Borromini. The other statues represent the *Ganges* whose oar refers to its navigability (Asia), and the *Danube* with the horse that stands for those raised in its area that were among the best in Europe. Africa is represented by the *Nile*, with a palm tree, and a lion, and a veil over its face because at that time the source of the river was yet to be discovered. The red granite obelisk was made in Rome in the 1st century AD and placed in the Circus of Maxentius on the Appian Way

in the 4th century before being transferred here to celebrate the glory of the Pope.

The itinerary continues to **Piazza Campo dei Fiori** that can be reached by passing through Via della Cuccagna, south of Piazza Navona and crossing Corso Vittorio Emanuele II.

When, in 1887, a monument dedicated to the philosopher Giordano Bruno, burnt at the stake as a heretic on this site on January 17th, 1600, was set up here, the preexisting fountain, was removed. Made by Giacomo della Porta in 1590 for Pope Gregory XIII Boncompagni, it was reassembled in front of the Chiesa Nuova where it still stands. In 1622 a lid was placed on it - making it look like a tureen - because



Fountain of Neptune

the local women would not refrain from using it for their laundry. Campo de' Fiori remained without a fountain until 1924, when the municipality decided to have a new one set up on the side towards Piazza della Cancelleria. Fed by the Acqua Paola, the simple granite fountain consists of a quatrefoil basin supported by a square-



Fountain of Via degli Staderari

based pedestal standing on an oval basin decorated with marble handles and tiles. It is worth mentioning that the basement of the Palazzo della Cancelleria still contains remains of the **Euripus**, the ancient channel, once open, that carried water from the artificial lake of Agrippa to the Tiber. Recent excavations have helped to establish the

course of this extraordinary structure as well as the exact location of the Baths of Agrippa, that spread out between Largo di Torre Argentina, Via di Santa Chiara and Via dei Cestari and were bounded on the southern side by the *Hecatostylum*, the portico with one hundred columns that stood by the Theatre of Pompey.



Fountain of the Tyrrhenian at the Vittoriano

FROM PIAZZA VENEZIA TO PIAZZA DEL POPOLO

*The Vittoriano*

Piazza Venezia is the site of the largest monument in the centre of Rome: the **Vittoriano**, built starting from the end of the 19th century to celebrate the first king of Italy, Victor Emanuel II. At the base of the monument, two ornamental fountains represent the Adriatic Sea, on the left and the Tyrrhenian Sea on the right, and refer to the new Italy, united and free. Both made in 1911, the fountains are set on a pyramid-shaped base against which the basin is placed. The **Fountain of the Adriatic** is by Emilio Quadrelli who conceived a seated figure similar to an ancient river god, facing the east and intent on stroking the Venetian lion of Saint Mark. Pietro Canonica executed the **Fountain of the Tyrrhenian** represented by a seated man with a she-wolf resting at his feet. In the courtyard of the Palazzo Venezia, whose entrance is in Piazza San Marco n.47, you can see the **Fountain of Venice**, built in 1730 by Carlo Monaldi

for the Venetian ambassador Barbon Morosini who lived in the palace. The palace itself was constructed towards the middle of the 15th century by the cardinal Pietro Barbo, who later became Pope Paul II. Given to the Venetian Republic a century later as a seat for the Venetian ambassadors in Rome, it acquired the name of Palazzo Venezia. After an interval as property of the Hapsburg empire, in 1929 Benito Mussolini chose it as headquarters of the Fascist government and addressed the crowds from the famous balcony. During the venetian period, the building underwent numerous transformations and embellishments, including the addition of a fountain in the garden in 1730. Still visible today, it consists of a wide basin flanked by benches decorated with cherubs holding the symbols of the lands conquered by Venice (Dalmatia, Morea, Candia and Cyprus). At the centre, on a double seashell sup-



Fountain of the Pigna

ported by Tritons, stands a sculpture of the *Wedding of Venice to the Sea*. The personification of the city is recognizable by the lion of St. Mark's at its feet and the doge's hat on its head.

Return to Piazza San Marco and look out for the **Fountain of the Pigna Neighbourhood**, past the garden, in front of the Vittoriano. It is one of the most successful creations of Pietro Lombardi, the Roman architect who devoted himself to the design of little neighbourhood fountains after winning the contest for the Fountain of the Amphorae in Piazza dell'Emporio in 1926. The eight fountains he created are scattered throughout the city. Each consists of an original and essential sculpture symbolic of the area it represents. According to tradition, the name of this neighbourhood derives from the large bronze sculpture of a pinecone ("pigna" in Italian) found near the Baths of Agrippa, by the Pantheon and today in the Courtyard of the Pinecone in the Vatican. The name more realistically refers to the Vigna (the Italian word for vineyard), later corrupted into "pigna", of Tedemario that extended from the area of Sant'Eustachio to this

neighbourhood. Made in 1927 in travertine, the small fountain consists of a pinecone and two stylized tulips in a vase. Because of its location, the fountain is a strategic landmark for appointments for both Romans and foreigners.

At this point, walk along the Via del Corso up to the corner of Via Lata where on the side of the 17th century Palazzo De Carolis, seat of the Banca di Roma, you will find the **Fountain of the Porter**. Along with *Madama Lucrezia*, *Abate Luigi*, *Marforio*, *Babuino* and *Pasquino*, this is one of the city's "talking fountains". For centuries political satires, known as pasquinades, written by the Romans to ridicule the authorities, were attached to these statues. The Facchino (porter) was made in the 16th century and probably designed by Jacopo Del Duca. Initially located on Via del Corso, on the facade of Palazzo Grifoni destroyed to make room for Palazzo de Carolis, the little fountain was moved to Via Lata in 1872 to protect it from the carriages that scraped against it and from vandals who threw stones at it. It represents a porter holding a barrel with a hole in it from which water comes out and falls into the semicircular basin. The porter, whose face is completely disfigured, wears the typical outfit of the water-carriers. Their guild must have had its seat in the nearby Piazza del Collegio Romano, where a large group of porters from Valtellina resided. An ancient inscription, at one time placed near the fountain and now lost, recalled a certain Abbondio Rizzo, a porter known for his amazing muscular strength and his propensity for getting drunk and who one day, as he was carrying a barrel of wine on his shoulder and another one against his side, died suddenly "without wanting to". The Fountain of the Porter was semi-public, in the sense that it was fed with

The culture of water Roma

water from the public water conduit of Trevi, but its maintenance was the responsibility of the family who owned the building though they were exonerated from utilization taxes.

Continue along Via del Corso and reach **Piazza Colonna** with the elegant fountain made by Giacomo della Porta at the end of the 16th century. Official fountain designer of Rome, this Genoese architect was the main protagonist of urban design in his time. The project for the fountain made for Pope Gregory XIII Boncompagni initially included the placing of the statue of Marforio, found in the Roman Forum near the Arch of Septimius Severus (now in the Palazzo Nuovo of the Capitoline Museums) in the basin. According to the same project, the fountain should have been placed at the foot of the Column of Marcus Aurelius, but probably did not meet the approval of the pope who set it up where it is now. Unadorned by massive decorative elements, only the large octagonal



Fountain of the Porter

basin in “portasanta” marble with bands and lion’s heads in white marble are original. In the 19th century small sculptures with dolphins and seashells by Achille Stocchi were added onto the sides and in the 20th century the central basin from which water gushes forth.

Return to Via del Corso and continue until you arrive at n.19 of Via di Fontanella Borghese, where you will find **Palazzo Borghese**. The garden contains a splendid nymphaeum from the 17th century, often closed to the public. Past the first courtyard, with a loggia and portico on two levels, you reach the garden with three beautiful baroque fountains, recently restored. Set up against the perimeter wall, they are all composed of a niche containing statues at the centre representing, starting from the fountain on the left, *Abundance* or *Flora*, the *Bath of Venus* and *Diana*. On the sides of the niches, couples of nude young men hold garlands of fruit that descend from the upper tympanum, which in its turn is decorated with an aedicule containing a bust, cherubs and youths in alternation with dragons and eagles from the coat of arms of the Borghese family. The conclusion of the complex decorative phase of the nymphaeum is the work of Carlo Rainaldi who elaborated a preceding project by Johann Paul Schor, known as Giovanni Paolo Tedesco, an Austrian. After starting construction, the artist was criticized for overdoing it with odd decorations, forced to leave the palazzo and to let Rainaldi take his place. The sculptures in the niches were made by Francesco Cavallini, Leonardo Reti and Filippo Carcani who fully respected the canon of baroque sculpture.

From Piazza Borghese, the itinerary proceeds towards Piazza del Porto di Ripetta whose name recalls the famous port built in 1704 by Alessandro Specchi and destroyed in the 19th century when the avenues along the river



Fountain of Piazza Colonna

were constructed. The fountain reassembled here around 1930 after being dismantled to facilitate work on the river banks, only partially recalls the original aspect of the **Fountain of the Navigators**, also erected by Alessandro Specchi by the Port of Ripetta. A rock supporting a seashell and two dolphins emerges from an oval basin. The wrought iron lantern was added towards the middle of the 18th century to aid the docking of ships at night. The two columns standing near the fountain were also set up in the Port of Ripetta in 1704 and moved here during the construction of the embankments. They indicate the highest levels reached by the floods of the Tiber, along with the names of the popes ruling at the time.

On the right hand side of the Church of San Rocco, a tall **hydrometer**, built in 1821, instead has a scale indicating the levels reached by the numerous floods, such as the one in 1598, that exceeded four metres!

In Piazza San Rocco you will also find the **Fountain of the Botticella** (Italian for “small barrel”), built in 1774 by

order of Pope Clement XIV Ganganelli. It was initially placed against the facade of Palazzo Valdambriani that used to stand between the two churches and was then destroyed. Rebuilt in its present location, it was inserted in the niche of the supporting pilaster of the arch next to the Church of Saint Rocco. The fountain represents the head of a porter pouring water into a basin supported by a barrel. It recalls the Fountain of the Porter in via Lata, and is probably also connected with the activities of loading and unloading barrels, often containing wine, that took place in the area of Ripetta.

Cross Piazza Augusto Imperatore, pass through Largo dei Lombardi and reach **Palazzo Gomez Silj** at n.78/a of Via della Croce. The building was designed in 1678 by Antonio De Rossi and a quick glance into the courtyard, rich in ancient decorations and sculptures, is sufficient to enjoy the peculiar fountain made from a classical sarcophagus adorned with hunting scenes and surmounted by a bride and groom lying on their sides.

Return to Via del Corso and continue your walk up to Palazzo Rondinini at n. 518. The building, famous for having long housed Michelangelo's Pietà Rondinini, now in the Castello Sforzesco in Milan, was constructed in the 18th century by incorporating the small palazzo the Cavalier D'Arpino had built here for himself in the early 17th century. The courtyard was once a real open air museum and is still today richly decorated with archeological findings. The nymphæum set against the wall was erected in 1764 by order of the Marquis Giuseppe Rondinini who at sixty married the twenty-year-old Irish beauty Elisabeth Kenneis, also famous for being the first foreign woman to dive into the sea at Rimini. Giuseppe Rondinini was a great collec-



Ponte Milvio

FROM VILLA GIULIA TO PONTE MILVIO

*Villa Giulia*

When Giovanni Maria Ciocchi del Monte, elected pope in 1550 with name of Julius III, started the construction of the splendid **Villa Giulia**, he must have considered the proximity of the site to the conduits of the **Virgo Aqueduct** that were in fact used with great skill to create one of the most beautiful and original nymphaea of the Renaissance era.

The novelty lies in the fact that until that time fountains and nymphaea had all been set up in elevated positions whereas this one had to be built by exploiting the natural depression where the water was. The clever architects summoned to solve this difficult problem were Giorgio Vasari, who probably asked Michelangelo for advice, Giacomo Vignola and Bartolomeo Ammannati.

The villa, centred around the nymphaeum, is articulated around two courtyards. The first one is formed by the semicircle of the main building and opens onto a loggia that leads to the second space, that of the **nymphaeum**, and defined by its contemporaries as a real “water theatre”. The space is divided

into three descending levels. The first one corresponds to the loggia and is decorated in the Ionic style, whereas the second, reached by two curved ramps, is in the Doric style. The ramps were at one time shaded by trees that created an effect of darkness that must have made going down to the deepest level of the “Low Fountain” even more enchanting. Four caryatids guard the access to this dusky semicircular area with niches in which water used to flow onto artificial rocks and into the basin obtained in the marble floor. Thanks to recent restoration, the scenographic whole, with its skilful blend of architecture and nature, has recovered its indisputable charm.

A section of the conduit of the Virgo Aqueduct is still visible in the area behind the Nymphaeum of Villa Giulia. The Virgo Aqueduct was built by Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa in 19 BC utilizing the springs at the eighth mile of the Via Collatina, near Salone. Legend has it that the name Virgin refers to a young girl who indicated a spring to Agrippa’s soldiers where they could refresh themselves. The term refers

more probably to the particular purity and lightness of the water, that being very low in calcium caused less damage to the conduits in time. It is in fact the only one of the ancient Roman aqueducts in continuous operation for twenty centuries; the springs were situated at a very low point with the conduits almost exclusively underground and so more protected from the destruction of wars and invasions.

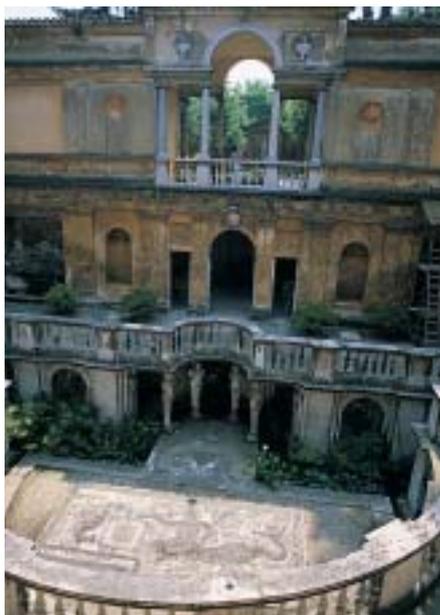
The aqueduct is about 20 kilometres long and its course is rather complex. Although arriving from the east, it entered into the city from the north at the Muro Torto after forming a wide arch that from the Via Prenestina cut diagonally through the Vie Tiburtina, Nomentana, and Salaria and reached the Via Flaminia.

On the slopes of the Pincio, the water was channeled into a reservoir from which its urban course began. The reservoir itself, later known as the “Bottino” is still in existence and has

given its name to the street near Piazza di Spagna. The course of the section, considered suburban in the past when the city had not yet spread that far, is rather well known and partially accessible. After reaching its maximum depth of around 30-40 metres in the Parioli area, it gradually rises to a depth of about 5 metres in the vicinity of Villa Giulia. The section of conduit in “mixed style”, visible upon request at the National Etruscan Museum housed in the villa, was in fact found precisely at that level.

Leave Villa Giulia and proceed towards Via di Villa Giulia, the road commissioned by Pope Julius III to arrive at his properties. At present it ends at the intersection with Via Flaminia but it used to continue right up to the banks of the Tiber where a small port allowed the pope to reach his villa directly from the Vatican by embarking at the Sant’Angelo bridge.

At the corner between Via di Villa Giulia and Via Flaminia the pope built a fountain for “public convenience”. With this gesture he tried to make amends for depriving the population of an enormous amount of water from the Virgo Aqueduct which he used for the spectacular nymphaeum in his villa. The project of the **Fountain of Pope Julius III**, still visible today despite its radical alterations, is generally attributed to Bartolomeo Ammannati. It used to be free standing and consisted of a triple facade in peperino on a single level. The central section was occupied by an inscription dedicated to Julius III, whereas the side sections were decorated with statues. Water gushed forth from “a great, handsome, ancient head of Apollo that spurts water into a beautiful, large, granite vase”. The structure, simple yet monumental, was greatly modified in 1561, when the architect Pirro Ligorio elevated it and built the



Nymphaeum of Villa Giulia



Fountain of Pope Julius III

Casino of Pius IV, today seat of the Embassy of Italy to the Holy See, right behind it. At present it is divided into two levels. At the centre of the upper section a plaque surmounted by two winged victories recalls Cardinal Carlo Borromeo, who commissioned the building. In the lower part, instead of the original inscription dedicated to Julius III, a large plaque mentions the name of Filippo Colonna, who inherited the Casino, and substituted the ancient granite vase with another basin and the head of Apollo with a large ornamental mask bearing the heraldic symbols of the Colonna family.

In front of his fountain, Julius III had placed a **drinking trough for animals**. After acquiring a more sumptuous aspect through restorations ordered by Cardinal Federico Borromeo in the 17th century and documented by drawings of

the period, the fountain underwent a series of modifications that have reduced it to the rather pitiful state it maintains to this day. It consists in fact of a simple rectangular basin surmounted by a composition made in 1932 with two semi-basins that pour water in another basin at the centre.

At this point the itinerary continues along the straight stretch of the Via Flaminia, but you can also turn left and reach the **Lungotevere** and proceed along the river and the imposing embankments that contain it.

The building of the embankments of the Lungotevere was made necessary to finally solve the problem of the constant and devastating floods that paralyzed the life of the city for weeks, but it did not meet everybody's approval. In particular, the massive retaining walls and quays caused the loss of a millennial tie



Barge on the Tiber

between Rome and the Tiber, along with the almost total disappearance of every activity along the river. For safety reasons, in fact, all the floating structures, such as the water mills and the moorings that had for centuries been a typical feature of the banks of the Tiber, were removed. Strange though it may seem, considering the present level of pollution, there used to be rather rudimentary bathing establishments documented as far back as the 18th century, also by Goethe who remembered how *“in the evening I go for a swim in the Tiber where there are these safe and comfortable dressing rooms”*. This age-old presence on the river is carried on today, even if for purely recreational purposes, by the numerous barges docked along the banks where it is possible to have a good time sunbathing, eating and at night, why not, even dancing. Among the new activities that developed along the Tiber, an important place was attributed already in the 19th century to boating clubs. Today these

exclusive clubs, the most famous being the “Tevere Remo”, the “Tirrenia Todaro” and the “Aniene”, own some of the best-equipped sports facilities in Rome, and are located mainly between the Lungotevere Prati and the Lungotevere dell’Acqua Acetosa.

After walking along the Lungotevere Flaminio, past the Duca d’Aosta Bridge, the Lungotevere Thaon de Revel offers a splendid view of the famous **Ponte Milvio**.

The bridge was built in 109 BC by the censor Marcus Emilius Scaurus in place of a preexisting wooden structure dating from the 3rd century BC. The name Milvio derives from the gens Molvia or Mulvia, the family to which the builder of the earlier bridge may have belonged. In the Middle Ages it was called *Molbius*, *Mole* or *Molle*, a term still present in popular usage.

Its strategic position north of the city caused it to become the site of famous historical events, such as the battle of 312 between Constantine and

The culture of water

Roma

Maxentius. The bridge featured also in the Gothic wars, when in 537 Witigis chose the surrounding area to set up his camp. In 799, instead, the clergy, the nobles and the population of Rome gathered here to welcome the arrival of Charlemagne.

The original structure consisted of six arches with four large ones at the centre and two smaller ones at the bridgeheads, but was constantly modified especially in the Middle Ages as its defensive function was increased. For this purpose, two towers were erected at the extremities and the arches at the bridgeheads substituted with two mobile wooden bridges. The last restoration that gave the bridge its present aspect was carried out by the architect Luigi Valadier in 1805 on the

occasion of the return to Rome of Pope Pius VII Chiaramonti, who had assisted at Napoleon's crowning in Paris. The bridge recovered its original six arches through the reconstruction in brickwork of the smaller arches on the sides. A monumental gate in neoclassical style that recalls the triumphal arches of antiquity, was built in place of the western tower. The opposite bridgehead is decorated with two statues representing the *Virgin Mary* and *Saint John Nepomucen*, who protects the faithful from drowning. Since 1951 the Milvian Bridge has been a pedestrian area with vehicular traffic deviated towards the **Ponte Flaminio**, the colossal work designed in 1932 by the architect Armando Brasini.



Ponte Flaminio



Ponte Sant'Angelo

The Tiber

Livy wrote:

“Not without reason did gods and men choose this place to found the city: extremely salubrious hills, a river suitable for the transportation of goods inland, and for receiving supplies from overseas; a place close enough to the coast to exploit its advantages, but not exposed to the threat of enemy fleets owing to its proximity to the centre of Italy, ideal for the development of the city, of which its greatness is evidence”. Virgil named the Tiber *“Genitor Urbis”* (father of the city), Martial called it *“sacred”*, according to Pliny the Elder it was *“born to rule always”*, until it finally became *“divine”*, summing up all the other definitions.

Its current saved the twins Romulus and Remus, carrying them to the foot of the Palatine, the hill looking over the ford of the Island in the Tiber. Only from that point was it possible to reach the salt pans, essential to the survival of all ancient populations.

For many centuries the Romans considered the river a frontier and its right bank became part of the city only much later. Even foreign gods such as Esculapius the god of medicine, arrived in Rome along this great route of commerce and communication. The snake sacred to the god, brought to Rome from Epidaurus to end a terrible plague, left the trireme boat that transported it and hid on the Island in the Tiber.

Esculapius had chosen this seat and his temple was built in 289 BC. From that moment the island became a healing sanctuary, an ideal place since the Tiber god himself guaranteed healing and the

isolation of the sick avoided dangerous contagion of the rest of the population.

The river was born from the bowels of the earth, emanating from the god of the underworld and was for this reason endowed with a double aspect: fertility and ruin.

The ancients considered crossing it an act of disrespect and the building of bridges required the favour of the gods that could be obtained only through the celebration of solemn propitiatory rites. In ancient Rome this task was entrusted to the most important order of priests, the *“Pontifexes”*.

The ancient bridges stand to this day as proof of the extraordinary building capacities of the Romans: none of the floods of the Tiber ever damaged the Aelian Bridge, better known today as the Sant’Angelo Bridge. Built to allow the Romans to approach Hadrian’s Mausoleum, the bridge remained for centuries the fastest course to reach the Basilica of Saint Peter, and it was precisely the bridge, the Tiber and the Mausoleum that led the popes to choose the Vatican as their residence. The Sant’Angelo Bridge still remains one of the most charming spots to cross the river.

In more recent times, until the end of the 19th century, another means of crossing the Tiber was provided by the *“barchette”* (little boats), a sort of public transport service contracted out by the Apostolic Chamber to private companies, that ferried people from one bank of the river to the other. Scene of ferocious crimes and dramatic accidents due mainly to overloading, the boat service



Ancient mooring

was outlawed on many occasions until it finally disappeared in the late 1800s. The god Tiber, source of commerce, whose current operated the mill vanes and whose waters were for centuries considered salubrious to the point of being sold door to door by water sellers, often became furious.

The river flooded the lower sections of the city causing destruction, death and epidemics.

The construction of the embankments, the most imposing engineering work since Rome became capital of Italy, led to a radical transformation of the image of the city. The charming sequence of gardens and buildings overlooking the river was lost, the ports were destroyed, the ancient bridges

modified, and the many beaches that brought recreation to the Romans disappeared. The banks of the Tiber today sum up the image of a more organized city as conceived by the culture of the late 19th century.

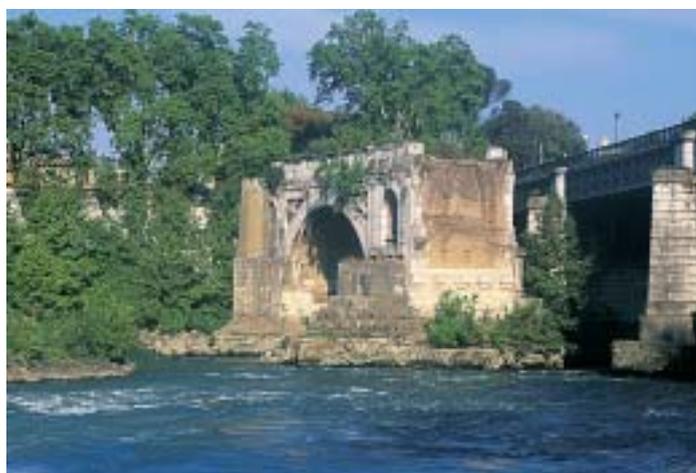
The Tiber continues to mirror an upside-down reflection of the Roman skyline, with its domes, statues, roofs, bridges and its millennial history.

A history made up of monuments but of people as well.

A history of which the river has been and continues to be a witness.

A witness of the encounter and clash of different populations, of the alternation of civilizations and states.

Navigation, abandoned for over a century, finally returns bringing new life to the river, and maybe allowing Romans and visitors to rediscover the life that flows along it. The Tiber will once again recover the central role it has always played in the history of this extraordinary city.



Ponte Rotto



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The Baths of Caracalla

The large bath complex, started under Septimius Severus and inaugurated by his son Caracalla in 216, is among the most grandiose ever built in antiquity. The entire structure covers an area of 337 by 328 metres and is second in size only to the Baths of Diocletian, erected about a century later between the Quirinal and the Viminal hills. The Baths of Caracalla were extended in the 3rd century by the emperors Heliogabalus and Alexander Severus with an outer perimeter (the *Porticus*) before being completed in 253. Restored by Aurelian, Diocletian and Teodoric, they remained in use until 537, when the Gothic king Witigis cut the aqueducts that provided Rome with water. On that occasion, the Antonine Aqueduct, a special branch of the Marcia Aqueduct built by Caracalla especially to supply his baths with sufficient water, was also destroyed.

The baths were large structures that offered health and hygienic facilities such as hot and cold baths, saunas, massage and physical exercise, and also served as ideal public meeting places for socializing. The colossal proportions of the surviving ruins – some of which reach thirty metres in height - give an idea of the monumental size of the rooms that could hold up to eight thousand people a day. Judging by what has survived, the splendour of the marble, bronze and mosaic decorations must have been extraordinary: the *Farnese*

Hercules and Bull, now on display at the National Archeological Museum of Naples, the basins of Egyptian granite in Piazza Farnese in Rome, the granite column in Piazza Santa Trinita in Florence, and the mosaics of *Athletes* in the Vatican Museums.

The outer perimeter, where service rooms were located, had two large exedrae on the sides and a on the sides and a flight of steps that hid the huge cistern made up of a double row of chambers with a total capacity of eighty thousand cubic metres of water. The steps served as bleachers from which people could watch the athletic games often held at the baths. The two large rectangular rooms situated at the corners were used as libraries. The bath complex proper was arranged symmetrically along the great hall of the central body of the building, accessible through the four doors on the north-east facade (perhaps the present entrance). Once inside the entrance vestibule, it was possible to go to the *apodyteria* (changing rooms) and then into the gyms, initially a courtyard surrounded by colonnades with a series of rooms for physical activities opening on to it. At this point one proceeded to the different areas starting from the *calidarium* (a heated room for bathing), on to the *tepidarium* (a small chamber at room temperature), and the *frigidarium* (the central hall with a large pool of cold water) and the *natatio* (open Olympic swimming pool). Other



small rooms, such as the *sphaeristeria* (for ball games), the *laconicum* (heated with hot air), and the *sudatio* (heated with steam), were arranged around the main area. Heat was produced by an oven constantly fed with wood and diffused through clay pipes that ran under the floors and through hollow spaces placed in the walls of the various rooms. The service area was underground, beneath the bath complex, and consisted of vast connecting chambers on two levels, quite similar to a road network. The ovens and wood storage were located on the upper level, whereas the lower one was for the canalization that carried the waste water into a large sewer along the

south-west side of the outer perimeter. In the 3rd century AD a **mithraeum**, one of the largest known in Rome, was built on this side of the perimeter, in the subterranean area beneath the exedra.

Viale delle Terme di Caracalla

Open from 9am to one hour before sunset

Info and reservations:

Tel. 06.39967700

Getting there:

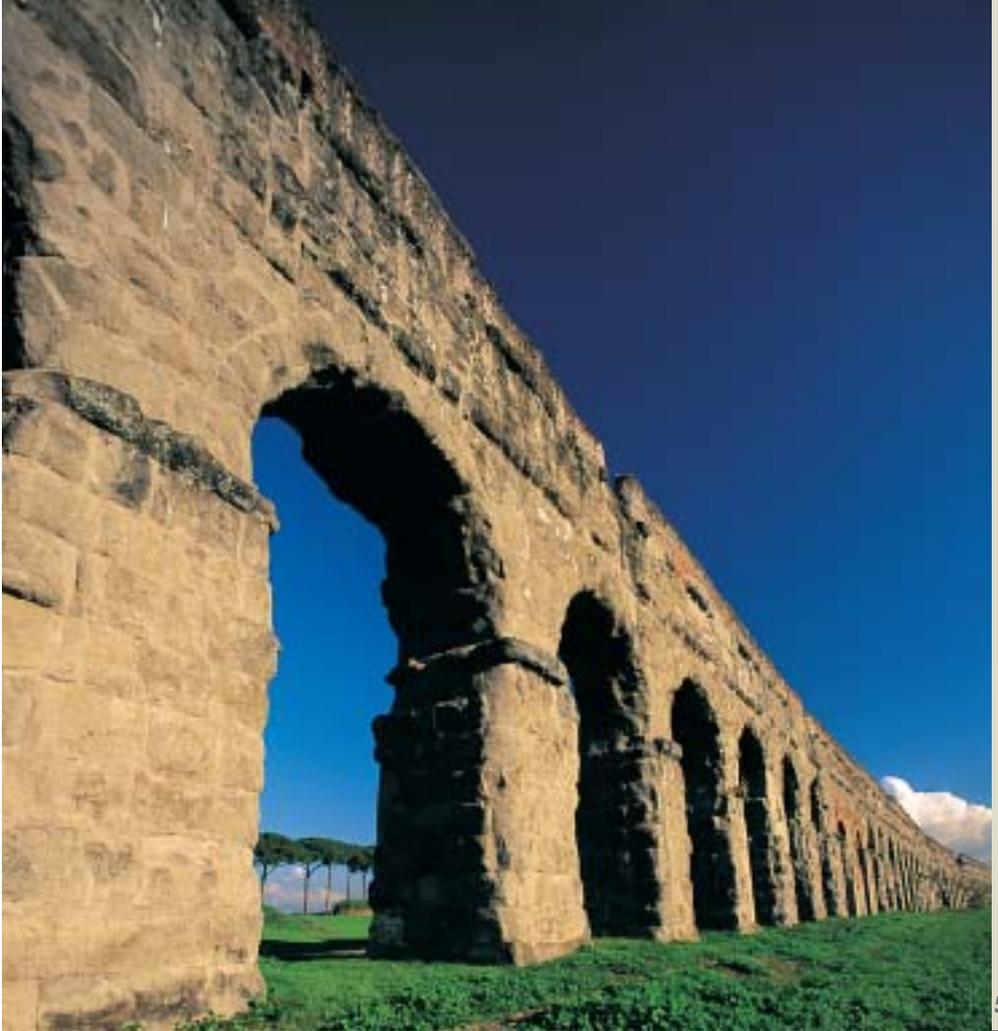
Metro B from Termini- Circo Massimo stop

The Park of the Aqueducts

The magnificent Park of the Aqueducts extends between Via Lemonia, Via del Quadraro and Via A. Viviani and consists above all, besides the remains of the Villa delle Vignacce and of the Casale di Roma Vecchia, of the imposing ruins of six Roman aqueducts: **Marcio**, **New Anio**, **Tepula**, **Claudio**, **Iulia** and **Felice**, that exploited the natural (morphological) incline of the territory, carrying water from the springs in the high valley of the Aniene and the Alban Hills to Rome where they ended their course at the Porta Maggiore.

The impressive arches that in places intersect and overlap, are still integrated in the beautiful landscape of the surrounding area with its meadows interspersed with hedges, trees, grasses, thistles and orchids. Turning left from Via del Quadraro you reach Tor Fiscale where the arches of the **Claudian Aqueduct**, running parallel to those of the Acqua Felice, reach a maximum height of 28 metres. The Claudian Aqueduct, inaugurated in 52 AD by the emperor after whom it was named, earned the epithet of magnificientissimus on account of the excellent quality of its water. In the 1st century Pliny claimed that *“If one carefully considers the abundance of water the aqueduct provides to the community (baths, pools, channels, homes, gardens, suburban villas), it must be admitted that nothing more grandiose has ever been built in the whole world”*. Its arches also support the pipes of the **New Anio**, completed by Claudius in 52 AD. It was the most

powerful of all the eleven ancient aqueducts and could carry 4,738 quinarie, corresponding to almost 200 million litres a day. At Tor Fiscale the arches of the Claudian Aqueduct meet those of the **Felice Aqueduct**, named after Pope Sixtus V (Felice Peretti) who built it in at the end of the 16th century. After abandoning its subterranean section, the conduit overlaps with the Marcus Aqueduct, whose pilasters and structures it re-utilizes. By following its course you can reach the complex of the **Villa delle Vignacce**, of which very little of the original splendour remains. The villa was built in the 2nd century and was one of the most beautiful in the Roman suburbs. Its ruins include the **cistern**, originally connected with the Marcus Aqueduct that supplied it with water. Further on, towards Via Lemonia, remains of the large apsed fountain belonging to the nymphaeum and of other water cisterns are also visible. By passing under the arches of the Felice Aqueduct, you find the path that leads to the **Fosso della marrana dell’acqua Mariana**, the ditch created in the 12th century by Pope Callixtus III to bring water into the city centre, after the aqueducts had been destroyed by the Germanic tribes. The channel crossed the *Ager maranus*, near modern Morena and was thus erroneously named “mariano” already in Renaissance times. The term “marrana” was later applied to all the ditches in the Roman countryside. Continuing on your walk, you will reach the **Casale di Roma Vecchia**



(the Old Rome Farmhouse) built in the 13th century along the via Latina. Located between the Marcus and Claudius Aqueducts, its function was to control the entire area. To the east there are visible remains of a section built in tufa of the **Marcus Aqueduct**, named after the praetor Quintus Marcus Rex, who built it in 144 BC, at the time of the destruction of Carthage. With its 90 kilometres, the Marcus Aqueduct was one of the longest in Rome and its cool, salubrious water was one of the favourites of the Romans. Above it runs the channel of the **Aqua Tepula**, brought to Rome in 125 BC and superimposed on the Marcus aqueduct at the end of the Republican period, along with the

Aqua Iulia of which almost nothing remains. The name of the Aqua Tepula is connected to the temperature reached by its water at the springs, which was about 17 degrees Celsius. It is worthwhile to continue the visit of the park along the avenue lined with trees that flanks the ditch of the Mariana water on the right. The avenue partially traces the ancient course of the **Via Latina** that started at the gate by the same name and connected Rome to Capua. Along its slab-stone pavement, it is still possible to see the ruins of tombs, farmhouses and Roman villas.

Getting there:

Metro Line A from Termini

Giulio Agricola stop

The Ponte Nomentano

The bridge, a point of transit on the Aniene river and an extraordinary example of military fortification, is named after the Via Nomentana, as it is located at the third mile of the road. Built in the 2nd century BC, it was destroyed by Totila in 549 and rebuilt a few years later by Narsetes. The bridge consists of a large arch covered in travertine and four minor arches. The fortifications were added in the 8th century by Pope Hadrian I and in the 15th century by Pope Niccolò V Parentucci, whose coat of arms is still visible above the arch on the external side. The bull's head and the club inserted on the keystone may refer to Hercules, to whom the bridge was probably dedicated in antiquity. Many important historical events took place here, including the encounter between Pope Leo III and Charlemagne in the year 800. In 1805, after having spent many years between France and Italy, Simón Bolívar resolved to free his homeland

from the Spanish invaders. On this site, inspired by the magnificent remains of ancient Rome, and in the presence of his friend, the Argentinean patriot Simón Rodríguez, he took the fateful oath with which he promised to never rest until the chains that oppressed his people were broken. He then returned to South America and won many victories that earned him the title of *libertador* as well as dictatorial powers when he returned to Caracas in 1813. In 1849, instead, French troops bombarded the bridge in order to prevent the passage of the Italian patriots. The damage was repaired in 1856, and the merlons of the towers rebuilt. Today the bridge is for pedestrian use only and inserted in the surrounded greenery despite the intense urbanization of the area.

Getting there:

Bus 90 from Termini



The Nymphaeum of Egeria



The Nymphaeum is in the Park of the Caffarella, outside the Gate of Saint Sebastian, within walking distance from Via Appia Pignatelli. It was built by the Greek aristocrat Herodius Atticus in the grounds of his suburban villa, the *Pago Triopio*, situated between the Via Appia and the water course Almone. The estate of *Pago Triopio* was inherited by Herodius Atticus at the death of his wife Annia Regilla, whom he probably murdered when she was expecting their fifth child. On the vast property in which the main building was surrounded by a farm village, Herodius Atticus built a temple dedicated to Ceres and Faustina, later converted into the church of Sant'Urbano. The Nymphaeum was erected near the Almone and, since the Renaissance, erroneously thought to be the grotto of the nymph Egeria whose cult was instead celebrated in the sacred woods of the Camene, in the area of the modern Piazza Capena. According to tradition, every night king Numa Pompilius and Egeria would withdraw into the sacred woods of the Camene where he

received inspiration for writing up Rome's sacred laws from the nymph who was an expert in human matters and divine mysteries. The Nymphaeum of Egeria in the *Pago Triopio* was a splendid structure immersed in the greenery of the park and decorated with fountains, probably dedicated to the god Almone. The large rectangular hall, frequented by Herodius Atticus and his guests in the hot Roman summers, has maintained its original vault covering and one of the niches in the side walls containing an ancient statue. Water was provided by the spring in Via Appia Pignatelli and channeled through terracotta pipes before spouting from the numerous side niches probably also decorated with statues. At one time the nymphaeum was surrounded by lush vegetation and hidden by ivy hanging over it. The vault was covered in pumice stone and by the delicate tendrils of Capelvenere (Venus hair) fern, that along with moss and lichen recreated the impression of a natural grotto. Outside, a portico surrounded a still visible rectangular basin in which the water was collected before flowing into the Almone. In the 19th century the Nymphaeum was a favourite place for Romans and visitors alike. In the famous tavern built inside the wall structure, illustrious travelers, including Goethe, loved to while away the hours in the tranquility of the natural surroundings. Since 1948 the spring of the Nymphaeum has been run by the "Acqua Minerale Egeria" company.

Getting there:

Metro Line B – Circus Maximus stop, then bus 118.



INFORMATION POINTS

Aeroporto Leonardo Da Vinci
(International Arrivals - Terminal B)

Largo Goldoni (Via del Corso)
tel. 0668136061

Piazza San Giovanni in Laterano
tel. 0677203535

Via Nazionale (Palazzo delle Esposizioni)
tel. 0647824525

Piazza delle Cinque Lune (Piazza Navona)
tel. 0668809240

Piazza Pia (Castel Sant'Angelo)
tel. 0668809707

Piazza del Tempio della Pace (Fori Imperiali)
tel. 0669924307

Piazza Sonnino (Trastevere)
tel. 0658333457

Via dell'Olmata (Santa Maria Maggiore)
tel. 064740955

Piazza dei Cinquecento (Stazione Termini)
tel. 0647825194

Stazione Termini (Galleria Gommata)
tel. 0648906300

Via Marco Minghetti (Fontana di Trevi)
tel. 066782988



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COMUNE DI ROMA



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Via Parigi, 11 - 00185 Roma
Tel. 06.488991 - Fax 06.4819316

Visitor Center
Via Parigi, 5

Tourist Information Service
Tel. 06.36004399

www.romaturismo.it