

# *Heritage Tours*

by American Ancestors



## *Villas and Gardens of Rome*

*Tour Leader: Curt DiCamillo*

March 21-27, 2022 | Italy

**No place can compare to Rome.** And no time is better than spring in the Eternal City, where we'll have exclusive access to some of the most private and elusive places in the Italian capital. From the great villas built in and around the city, to the most secret gardens, the best of Rome will unfold for us. There will be exclusive, private visits to the Sistine Chapel (*confirmation pending*) and the Villa Medici and meals at the Palazzo Patrizi and the American Academy in Rome. Not to mention special visits to the Papal Palace of Castel Gandolfo, Parco dei Mostri, and to a secret, private villa that has been in one noble family for over 400 years. We'll be based at the luxurious Hotel de la Ville, noted for its confluence of classical Roman design and contemporary cool. Housed in an 18th century palazzo at the top of the Spanish Steps, the hotel has breathtaking views of the city and features three restaurants, an enchanting courtyard, and a Sicilian-inspired spa.



Mosaico / Courtesy of Hotel De La Ville



Cielo / Courtesy of Hotel De La Ville

### **HOTEL DE LA VILLE, ROME**

The luxurious, five-star Hotel de la Ville is centrally located near the Spanish Steps, yet provides a tranquil atmosphere away from the throngs of tourists. This vibrant, modern-day icon incorporates the best of classical design with modern comforts, as exhibited in the onsite wellness center and throughout each spacious guest room. Guests will enjoy sumptuous linens, over-sized king beds (a true luxury in Europe!), and lavish marble bathrooms. You might dine in the elegant Mosaico and Da Sistina onsite restaurants, or sip cocktails on the Cielo rooftop terrace bar.

### **ITINERARY**

#### **Monday, March 21—Arrival in Rome**

Arrive independently at Rome Fiumicino Airport and transfer to Hotel de la Ville. We'll gather in the evening for a stroll to the nearby French Academy in Rome, housed in the breathtaking surroundings of the **Villa Medici**. Here we'll have a private tour of the gardens, followed by an elegant reception of heavy hors d'oeuvres in the Salon de Musique.



Villa Medici / Jean-Pierre Dalbéra

## Tuesday, March 22—Rome

The morning begins with an exclusive visit to a **private villa** that has been in one noble family's ownership for over 400 years. Our host will give us a full history of her family, their 16th century palace, and the beautiful frescoes by Guercino and Caravaggio. Then we'll stroll down the famous Via Veneto, passing through the Piazza Barberini to admire Bernini's **Fontana del Tritone**, before arriving at the **Chiesa di San Carlino alle Quattro Fontane**. This church is Francesco Borromini's first independent commission and serves as an iconic masterpiece of Baroque architecture. We'll then walk on to the enormous **Palazzo delle Esposizioni** for a buffet lunch at one of central Rome's most highly regarded restaurants. This evening, the owners of a **rarely visited private villa** invite us to tour their grand residence, originally built for Cardinal Alessandro Albani in the mid-18th century. Since 2014, the villa has housed one of the largest collections of ancient marble sculpture in Italy. Dinner this evening will be in the Ludovisi neighborhood, near our hotel.



## Wednesday, March 23—Tivoli & Vatican City



This morning we head for the low hills east of Rome, where we'll visit the remains of **Hadrian's Villa**, the sensational, sprawling country home of ancient Rome's best-traveled and most sophisticated emperor. Hadrian himself designed the buildings of the villa to showcase the various styles of his far-flung empire, the ruins of which are remarkably well maintained today. We'll have lunch at a great eatery in the Roman countryside,

after which we'll visit the charming hill town of Tivoli. Here we'll tour the frescoed halls and sumptuous gardens of the **Villa d'Este**, one of the greatest late Renaissance homes ever built, and experience the 400-year-old water features, which still function as perfectly today as when they were built. Tonight, back in Rome, we'll have an exclusive, after-hours access to the **Vatican Museums** and **Sistine Chapel** (*confirmation pending*). Dinner tonight is on your own.



## Thursday, March 24—Rome

Our Thursday begins in the colorful Trastevere neighborhood of Rome, known for its trattorias, artisan shops, and quaint B&Bs. Here we'll meet with expert art historians and conservators at the **Superior Institute for Conservation and Restoration**, where we'll tour the restoration labs and see some of the projects currently underway. We'll continue up the Janiculum Hill, which will provide marvelous views over Rome. Next we'll visit **San Pietro in Montorio** to view Bramante's **Tempietto**, an unrivaled gem of early Renaissance architecture. Then we're off to the venerable **American Academy in Rome**, one of Italy's top centers for scholarship and a beloved haven for American scholars studying ancient Roman and Italian culture and history. Following a guided tour of the campus, we will join the academy's fellows for a buffet lunch in the elegant courtyard. Then we're off to the **Villa Farnesina**, a pure Renaissance riverfront palace created by the richest man in 16th-century Rome, the banker Agostino Chigi, and opened exclusively for us. Enjoy Raphael's sublime *Galatea* fresco in blissful isolation! Today's pièce de résistance is a visit to the majestic **Galleria Borghese**, where we'll have a tour through frescoed rooms filled with jaw-dropping art. After time to rest and relax at the hotel, we'll walk to a nearby restaurant for dinner.





### Friday, March 25—Bomarzo, Vignanello & Caprarola

This morning we'll embark on a journey to the countryside just north of Rome, where we'll visit the one-of-a-kind **Parco dei Mostri**, the esoteric Italian Mannerist sculpture park of fantastical monsters and creatures that was created in 1585. The rest of the morning is dedicated to the lush gardens and grounds of the **Villa Lante**, considered the pinnacle of Mannerist design. Every aspect of this garden is perfectly proportioned and richly detailed, from the countless fountains to dramatic, cascading terraces. We will have Roman countryside cuisine for lunch in the lovely village of **Vignanello**, followed by a visit to the 16th century Renaissance gardens of **Castello Ruspoli**. The noble and influential Ruspoli family was closely connected to the Holy See and still maintains ownership of the property today. On our way back to Rome, we'll stop for a guided tour of the **Villa Farnese at Caprarola**, a lavish five-sided mansion that houses an exceptional art collection. This massive Renaissance and Mannerist house had its preservation championed by Prince Charles, and asserts itself as a showplace of aristocratic family power, surrounded by densely wooded hills. After our return to Rome you will have the rest of the evening and dinner on your own.

### Saturday, March 26— Castel Gandolfo Park of the Aqueducts & Rome

This morning we head out to the delightful **Alban Hills** south of Rome, a longtime privileged place of summer escape for popes and wealthy Romans. The tidy hilltop villages here—the “Castelli Romani”—are gilt with a lovely array of villas from the 16th through 18th centuries. An in-depth tour will show off the splendors of the Pope's summer palace in Castel Gandolfo and its splendid **Villa Barberini Gardens**. On the return, take a guided stroll in Rome's one-of-a-kind Park of the Aqueducts where we can compare up close two still-standing historic aqueducts —Emperor Claudius' from 52AD and Pope Sixtus V's from 1586AD—that brought fresh water to the Eternal City. Lunch and the afternoon are on your own, with Rome providing endless possibilities. We will celebrate the ending of a glorious week in Rome at the **Palazzo Patrizi**, the private residence of Marquis Corso Patrizi, who will give us a tour of his opulent home, after which we'll sit down for a festive farewell dinner.



### Sunday, March 27—Return to the United States

Transfer to Rome Fiumicino Airport for independent flights home.

### Your Tour Leader



**Curt DiCamillo**, Curator of Special Collections, internationally recognized authority on English country houses and the decorative arts, joined American Ancestors/NEHGS in February 2016 as our first Curator of Special Collections. A longtime member of American Ancestors/NEHGS, Curt has led highly successful heritage tours for us to England and Scotland, lectured extensively in the United States and abroad, and taught classes on British culture and art at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Curt was previously Executive Director of The National Trust for Scotland Foundation USA, where he successfully raised more than \$7 million and initiated many innovative programs. As Curator of Special Collections at American Ancestors/NEHGS, Curt provides strategic direction and expert guidance for organizing and exhibiting our extensive collection of family history-related artifacts and fine arts.

## VILLAS AND GARDENS OF ROME

### March 21-27, 2022

#### Tour Cost:

Land Package: \$8,995

Single Supplement: \$1,995

*Tour price is per person, based on double occupancy, with a minimum of 12 paying participants.*

**Deposit & Final Payment:** A deposit of **\$1,500 per person** is required to reserve a spot on the tour. Deposits are payable by check or credit card (MasterCard, Visa, or American Express). Final balance will be invoiced and is due to NEHGS on December 3, 2021. Final balance payments are payable by check only. Registrations will be accepted beyond this date on a space-available basis.

**Activity Level:** Moderate; good walking ability is advised.

**Flights:** Airfare is not included in the tour price. Participants are responsible for all aspects of their round-trip air arrangements. Please do not purchase airline tickets until the operation of the tour is confirmed.

**Terms & Conditions:** International Seminar Design, Inc. ("ISDI") requires that all tour participants be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 to participate on the tour. Upon receipt of registration, ISDI will send registrant a Participant Tour Agreement detailing the full terms and conditions for this tour. This document must be signed and returned to ISDI before participant's registration is considered complete and any arrangements can be confirmed.

**Cancellations & Refunds:** Cancellation by participant must be made in writing to NEHGS and is effective only upon acknowledged receipt by NEHGS. There is a non-refundable registration and planning fee of \$500 per person regardless of cancellation date. Written cancellation received by NEHGS on or before December 17, 2021: full refund minus \$500 per person registration and planning fee. Written cancellation received by NEHGS between December 18, 2021 and February 7, 2022: full refund minus \$3,950 per person cancellation fee (includes registration and planning fee). Written cancellations received by NEHGS on or after February 8, 2022: no refund. Tour registration is non-transferable. In the case of cancellation, substitutions are not allowed. After the tour has commenced, no refunds will be issued for any reason including, but not limited to, unused portions of tour. If the tour is cancelled by NEHGS or ISDI due to low enrollment, active registrants will receive a full refund of all tour payments.

**Travel Insurance:** Travel Insurance is not included in the tour cost, but participants are strongly encouraged to purchase a travel protection plan in conjunction with this tour, including coverage of trip cancellation, trip interruption, emergency evacuation/repatriation, medical expenses, lost or damaged baggage, and other expenses and/or losses incurred due to unexpected situations. Should a participant cancel at any time after registering for the tour, NEHGS and ISDI must strictly abide by the cancellation policy outlined herein. Travel insurance information will be sent upon tour registration.

**Tour Price Inclusions:** Six (6) nights' accommodation at five-star Hotel de la Ville, a Rocco Forte property; breakfast daily, four (4) lunches, two cocktail receptions, three (3) dinners; all sightseeing and admission charges as outlined in the itinerary; land transportation by deluxe air-conditioned coach or vans appropriate for historic center transfers; bottled water on coach; leadership of Curt DiCamillo for duration of the tour; expert local guides for planned sightseeing activities; gratuities at included meals and for guides and drivers; service charges and taxes; complete pre-departure documentation and materials, including recommended reading list, travel tips, and destination information.

**Tour Price Exclusions:** Airline tickets, airline taxes, or fuel surcharges; baggage fees, airport portorage; airport transfers; meals other than those specified in the itinerary, gratuities for hotel cleaning staff; personal items such as telephone calls, room service, a-la-carte orders, specialty wines and liquors, valet/laundry service, travel extensions, and tour deviations. If due to weather, flight schedules, or other uncontrollable factors, you are required to spend any additional nights, you will be responsible for your own hotel, transfer, and meal costs. Personal insurance for health, baggage, and tour cancellation is not included.

#### For more information:

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