



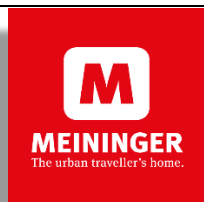
Itinerary For a Four Day Philosophy & Religion Study Tour to Rome. Prepared For The R.S. Department.

Dates: To Be Confirmed



The itinerary is designed to balance visits of the greatest interest with recreative activities. It aims to make the maximum use of time without exhausting participants. The itinerary we have proposed is flexible and is only finalised after discussion with the Party Leader(s). Flexibility is also built into the tour itself as changes can be made at very short notice according to weather conditions etc. The visit can be guided throughout. All excursions are well-prepared and are backed by notes and a commentary. The director is able to run the tour according to Party Leader wishes. In this way Party Leaders will be free to concentrate on the care of their pupils rather than the organisation of the tour. The whole stay is underpinned by excellent accommodation, catering, transport and security.

ACCOMMODATION



Hotel Meininger**

Via S. Martino della Battaglia, 16, 00185, Rome, Italy.

vp@meininger-hotels.com

Tel: +390694801352.

The Hotel Meininger opened in Rome only last year & brings a new concept of accommodation for the young to the 'Eternal City'. The German Meininger Hotels chain has built an excellent reputation in Northern Europe, has won several youth accommodation awards & is now expanding south. The dorm-style hotel rooms have TV's, en-suite bathrooms, reading desks & lamps. There is a popular reception, lounge & bar area downstairs with free wifi throughout the hotel.

The hotel is centrally located in the middle of Rome & our hotel forms an ideal base for exploring the city. Arranged over several floors, the hotel is spotlessly clean & the decor is modern & youthful. The hotel staff are friendly & informative & we have found the Hotel Meininger to be a popular & comfortable base for our groups in Rome.

DAY ONE

05.15	Meet at School. Load luggage into coach.
05.30	Depart School. Onward transfer to Local Airport.
06.30	E.T.A. Local Airport. Commence check in.
08.35	Depart Local Airport on Jet2 Flight LS791.
12.35 <i>(Note: 1 hour time difference).</i>	E.T.A. Rome Fiumicino Airport.
13.15	Walk to Train Station, Fiumicino Airport.
13.30	E.T.A. Train Station. Purchase tickets for next departure.
13.45	Train transfer to central Rome on fast Da Vinci train service.
14.25	E.T.A. Termini Train Station, central Rome. Walk to Hotel Meininger.
14.45	E.T.A. Hotel Meininger. Check-in & allocate keys.

Students will have time to settle in, rest & shower after the transfer from the U.K. The hotel manager will give a short introductory briefing outlining hotel rules & facilities.

16.00	Local bus transfer to The Pantheon.
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16.30	<u>Visit to The Pantheon.</u>
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The Pantheon was commissioned by Marcus Agrippa as a temple to all the gods of Ancient Rome, and rebuilt by Emperor Hadrian in about 126 AD.

The building is circular with a portico of three ranks of huge granite Corinthian columns under a pediment. A rectangular vestibule links the porch to the rotunda, which is under a coffered, concrete dome, with a central opening (oculus) to the sky. Almost two thousand years after it was built, the Pantheon's dome is still the world's largest unreinforced concrete dome. The height to the oculus and the diameter of the interior circle are the same, 43.3 metres (142 ft). It is one of the best preserved of all Roman buildings. It has been in continuous use throughout its history & is now a Roman Catholic church dedicated to "St. Mary and the Martyrs" but informally known as 'Santa Maria Rotonda'.

After visiting the interior of the Pantheon, students & staff may enjoy exploring the ancient cobblestoned lanes around the Pantheon, perhaps enjoying the first of many gelato ice-creams or a drink in one of the cafes lining the main square. There are many street entertainers here as well as tourist shops.

17.30 Walk to Trevi Fountains.

17.50 **Visit to The Trevi Fountains**

These are the most famous fountains in Rome and probably in the world. Used as the backdrop to many a black and white film classic and several well-known songs, the Trevi Fountains are best viewed at dusk when the underwater lighting makes them look spectacular. Legend has it that anyone who tosses a coin into the fountains guarantees their return to the city. The fountain was built in 1735 by the architect Salvi and was decorated by several artists from the Bernini school. The fountains are an ideal place to sit and sketch, or to simply enjoy a gelato on the famous steps facing the fountains.

18.45 Local bus transfer to Hotel Meininger.

19.30 E.T.A. Hotel Meininger.

Students will have time to deposit coats & bags in rooms before dinner.

20.00 **Dinner at Hotel Meininger.**

We will enjoy a very good three-course dinner buffet at the hotel restaurant.

DAY TWO

- 08.00 Breakfast.
- 09.15 Walk to Termini Train Station.
- 09.45 Metro transfer to The Vatican.
- 10.15 E.T.A. Ottaviano San Pietro Metro Station. Walk to St Peter's Square.

Students will view the formidably high wall of Vatican City as we approach the entrance to St Peter's Square.

10.45 **Visit to St. Peter's Square.**

We will enter Vatican City through the impressive Piazza San Pietro, which becomes packed with pilgrims every Sunday as they gather to hear the Pope's weekly sermon. The square was designed by Bernini between 1656 & 1667 & the colonades of the square's perimeter are exactly symmetrical. The huge obelisk in the centre of the square was erected using 150 horses & 47 winches. We will walk past the papal platform to get to the pillared entrance of The Church of St. Peter's.

11.30 **Visit to The Church of St. Peter's**

The centre of the Catholic faith, the church of St. Peter's draws pilgrims from all over the world. The highlight is Michelangelo's sumptuously decorated basilica & dome. St. Peter's took more than a century to construct & all of the great architects of the Roman Renaissance & Baroque played a part in its design.

We will enter through the central Filarete Door of 1445 to enter the church & walk along the 715ft. nave to view the spectacular dome of St. Peter's, which stands 448ft. high.

Students will explore the contents of the church, which contains 11 chapels & 45 altars in addition to a wealth of precious art. The central focus of the interior is the Papal Altar.

12.45 Lunch outside Vatican City.

There are many restaurants & cafes in the sidestreets around Vatican City where staff & students can enjoy a restaurant lunch.

14.15 Walk to The Vatican Museums.

14.35 E.T.A. Vatican Museums. Pass through security checks to enter.

15.00 **Visit to The Sistine Chapel, Vatican Museums & Sistine Chapel.**

Our visit to the Vatican Museums & Sistine Chapel will be a highlight of the tour. The chapel has been frescoed by some of the finest artists of the 15th & 16th centuries, including Perugino, Ghirlandaio, Botticelli & Signorelli. The frescoes show scenes from the life of Moses & of Christ. The decoration of the chapel walls was completed between 1534 & 1541 by Michelangelo who painted the incredible Last Judgement. Students will admire the frescoed walls with the famous stories such as the detail of the souls meeting the wrath of Christ in Michelangelo's Last Judgement. Students will view the frescoed ceiling, also by Michelangelo, showing the Creation of the World & the Fall of Man.

16.45 Meet outside Vatican Museums. Walk to Castle St Angelo.

17.30 **Visit to the Castle Saint Angelo.**

The imposing Castle Saint Angelo is one of the most impressive of Rome's landmarks & was built to house the Emperor Hadrian's mausoleum. The castle overlooks the River Tiber in a dominating position on a curve of the river. The Vatican is within a short distance & the escape pathway between the Vatican & the castle bears testament to past times when a Pope would have to have a secure fortress to hide in during times of trouble. We will climb to the roof of the castle to admire the superb views over the city below.

18.45 Walk to Piazza Navona.

19.15 **Exploration of The Piazza Navona.**

The Piazza Navona is one of Rome's most impressive squares & boasts some very important statues & fountains. The square was formerly used by the Romans as the setting for horse-drawn chariot races, with the track around the perimeter of the square. Today the square is lined with cafes & filled with street entertainers. The main pastime nowadays is people-watching from one of the cafes.

20.30 **Dinner at La Famiglia Restaurant, Via Calatafimi.**

22.00 E.T.A. Hotel Meininger.

DAY THREE

07.30

Breakfast.

08.30

Local bus transfer to The Colosseum.

09.00

Visit To The Colosseum.

The colosseum was the main arena where the gladiators used to do battle with the lions, tigers & each other. The Emperor would sit in the centre of the stadium & would have the final decision about whether or not a slave would be freed or would be executed in front of the baying crowds. The colosseum could be flooded to create an internal lake for water-jousting and a waterproof cover could be pulled over the whole stadium to protect spectators from the rain. The colosseum represented a high level of architectural expertise, even by modern standards. Once inside, pupils can view the gladiators' quarters, the jousting arena, the lions' cages and the seating area for the Emperor and his guests.

The visit to the Colosseum is always a highlight of the tour & gives students a powerful impression of the might & power of the Roman Empire as well as a glimpse into the life for the ordinary Roman living at the heart of the city.

11.00

Coffee/Ice-cream break near Colosseum.

After exploring the Colosseum & after the early morning start, participants will enjoy a refreshment pause in one of the many cafes located in the side-streets near the Colosseum. There is also a small Carrefour supermarket where students can purchase drinks & snacks.

11.30

Walk to Church of San Clemente.

12.00

Visit to the Church of San Clemente

This site is of particular interest to students of religion as it encapsulates 2000 years of religious history within one visit. We will visit the existing church to admire the Christian frescoes & mosaics. Afterwards we will descend underground to what used to be the ground level 2000 years ago. Underneath the existing church is an ancient Pagan temple still in perfect existence with a visible altar & pagan figurines.

In the early third century (from A.D. 200) in Rome, membership in the pagan cult of Mithras was widespread. Followers of the cult worshipped the god Mithras, whose legend is thought to be of Persian origin. Mithras is frequently depicted slaughtering a sacred bull, and bloody reenactments involving bull sacrifices were a central part of Mithraic rituals. At San Clemente, a portion of the 1st-century insula, which presumably had fallen out of use, was converted to a *Mithraeum*, or cult sanctuary. This place of pagan worship, including the altar where bulls were ritually slaughtered, can still be seen in the basilica's underground.

13.15 **Lunch near the Colosseum.**

There are many restaurants located in the side-streets near the Colosseum. Students can enjoy a pizza or pasta lunch on their al fresco tables. Alternatively, some students prefer to purchase picnic items from the Carrefour Supermarket & enjoy a picnic on the grassy bank overlooking the Colosseum – truly a picnic with one of the finest views in the world.

14.45 Walk to The Roman Forum.

15.15 **Visit to The Ancient Roman Forum.**

From the Colosseum we will walk through the Roman Forum - the political & judicial heart of the Roman Empire. Inside the Forum we will view the shrine to Caesar, near to the spot where he was assassinated, the House of the Vestal Virgins, the Temple & several Triumphal Arches. As we ascend out of the Roman Forum towards Capitaline Hill, participants will have a wonderful view of the ancient Forum with the Colosseum looming in the distance.

17.00 Walk to Piazza Venezia.

Our walk to The Piazza Venezia will lead us past Trojan's Markets – one of Europe's first commercial centres & Trajan's Column.

17.20 **Free Time in Piazza Venezia District.**

After walking through the Roman Forum, participants will be grateful for the opportunity of a sit-down with a drink or gelato in one of the cafes on the Piazza Venezia.

18.30 **Dinner at Pastarito Restaurant.**

20.15 E.T.A. Hotel Meininger.

DAY FOUR

08.00 Breakfast & hotel check-out.

09.30 Private coach transfer to The Catacombs.

10.15 **Visit to The Catacombs of San Sebastiano.**

In ancient Roman times, no one was allowed to be buried within the walls of the city. While pagan Romans chose cremation, Christians preferred to be buried (so they could be resurrected when the time came). But land was expensive & most Christians were poor. A few wealthy, landowning Christians allowed their land to be used as burial places.

The ancient catacombs are scattered outside the ancient walls of Rome. From the 1st to the 5th centuries, Christians dug an estimated 375 miles of tomb-lined tunnels, with networks of galleries as many as five layers deep. Bodies were wrapped in linen (like that of Christ's).

When Emperor Constantine legalized Christianity in AD 313, Christians began making pilgrimages to their burial places in the catacombs. In the 800's, when barbarian invaders started ransacking the tombs, Christians moved the relics of saints and martyrs to the safety of churches in the city centre.

For a thousand years, the catacombs were forgotten. In early modern times, they were excavated and became part of the Romantic Age's Grand Tour of Europe. Abandoned plates and utensils from ritual meals were discovered deep within catacombs.

The underground tunnels, while empty of bones, are rich in early Christian symbolism, which functioned as a secret language. The dove represented the soul. You'll see it quenching its thirst (worshipping), with an olive branch (at rest), or happily perched (in paradise). Peacocks, known for their purportedly 'incorruptible flesh' embodied immortality. The shepherd with a lamb on his shoulders was 'the good shepherd' - the first portrayal of Christ as a kindly leader of his flock. The fish was used because the first letters of these words — 'Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour' — spelled 'fish' in Greek. And the anchor is a cross in disguise. A second-century bishop had written on his tomb 'All who understand these things, pray for me'. Participants will view pictures of people praying with their hands raised — the custom at the time.

11.15 Coach transfer to Ostia Antica.

12.15 Lunch at the Ostia Antica Restaurant/Cafeteria.

The beautifully preserved ruins of Ostia lie 20 miles from Rome between the Tiber River & the Tyrrhenian Sea. The city was founded in the 4th century BC as a military camp to protect the River Tiber & Rome from seaborne invasions (the word 'Ostia' means 'mouth'). Ostia was important as the port through which most imported goods travelled. By the 2nd century AD it had become a flourishing commercial city with a population of 100,000 people whose buildings, taverns, theatres, shops & even toilets remain intact today.

The site of Ostia is a very good visit for those groups who choose to stay in Rome without visiting the Naples region & Pompeii. Many of the houses in Ostia are better preserved than in Pompeii, with their second levels still intact.

Today the ancient city lies a few kilometres from the sea due to the effects of silting of the river mouth over the centuries. We will have a guided tour of this important site including the Baths of Neptune with a large mosaic, the amphitheatre, the temples, the laundry shops, public baths, Forum & even a Synagogue built by the Jews who unloaded the barges from the quayside.

16.00	Coach transfer to Rome Fiumicino Airport.
16.30	E.T.A. Rome Fiumicino Airport. Commence check-in.
19.30	Depart Rome Fiumicino Airport on Easyjet Flight 2212.
20.40 (Local time)	E.T.A. Local Airport.
21.45	Coach transfer to School.
22.45	E.T.A. School.

! Please note: This is a Suggested Itinerary only. Please note that we make hotel, flight & itinerary bookings upon receipt of the initial deposit payments. The timings, visits, flights, airports & hotels contained within this itinerary serve as a guide only & may change. All are confirmed upon receipt of initial deposits !

OPTIONAL EXTENSION TO POMPEII

07.00 Breakfast, room checks & loading of suitcases into coach.

09.00 Coach transfer to Pompeii.

11.00 **Full Day's Visit to Archeological Ruins of Pompeii.**

Founded in the 7th Century B.C, Pompeii is of great interest for historians. It is said that while Rome gives an insight into the monumental architecture of the Romans, Pompeii illustrates their everyday life.

Pompeii had been a Roman colony since 80BC & prospered with the construction of many large temples, villas & palaces until 63AD, when it was devastated by an earthquake. The city had been largely rebuilt when Mount Vesuvius erupted in 79AD & buried the whole city under several layers of molten lava & ash. Approximately two thousand inhabitants were suffocated by the acrid smoke of the eruption & participants will be able to view many of the survivors' bodies frozen in the positions in which they died.

Our visit to Pompeii will include the amphitheatre, the army barracks, several temples, shops & some important paintings that have survived to this day.

We will break for lunch at the cafeteria inside the ruins of Pompeii.

16.00 Coach transfer to Sorrento.

17.00 E.T.A. Hotel Moon Valley.

18.00 **Dinner at Hotel Moon Valley.**

19.30 **Evening Visit to Sorrento.**

During the evening we will walk the short distance to the Piazza Tasso in central Sorrento. Students will enjoy viewing the activity in the central square & exploring the shops & night market of the old cobbled sidestreets.

DAY FOUR

08.00 Breakfast.

09.00 Coach transfer to Herculaneum.

10.30 **Visit to Roman City of Herculaneum**

The Tour Director will lead an excursion to the ancient Roman town of Herculaneum, which suffered the same fate as nearby Pompeii as a result of the eruption in 79AD. However, while Herculaneum is smaller & less impressive than Pompeii, the remains are better preserved because it was covered by a torrent of mud rather than the more harmful tufa stone that rained on Pompeii. The vast majority of the town's inhabitants were killed in the eruption, unlike those of Pompeii, most of whom managed to escape.

12.30 Lunch in Herculaneum.

14.00 Coach transfer to Mount Vesuvius.

15.00 **Ascent to The Crater of Mount Vesuvius.**

The volcano of Mount Vesuvius is still active & last erupted in 1944. The plume of smoke which hung over the cone of the volcano disappeared in 1948 but this is of little relief to local inhabitants as scientists expect the volcano to erupt every 30 - 40 years.

After taking the bus to the base of the volcano, we hike the 1.5 km reach the summit & the cone of the volcano, from where panoramic views of the Bay of Naples can be enjoyed. Pupils can also view into the cone of the volcano which is often sulphurous & steaming.

17.00 Return coach transfer to Sorrento.

18.00 E.T.A. Hotel Moon Valley, Sorrento.

19.00 **Dinner at Hotel Moon Valley.**

DAY FIVE

08.00 Breakfast, hotel check-out, room checks & loading of suitcases into hotel storage room.

09.30 **Morning Visit to Sorrento.**

We will enjoy some shopping time in the upmarket Santa Lucia district of the city, where there are many modern shops on a street which stretches down to the waterfront. There is a pleasant market selling lemon soap, fine clay works & the town's speciality - limoncello - a liquor distilled from the ripe Sorrento lemons grown in the surrounding hills.

11.30 Walk to La Sorgente Mozzarella Farm.

12.00 **Visit to The Sorrento Mozzarella & Olive Oil Farm.**

Located in a luxuriant lemon grove in the hills of Sorrento is the ancient Mozzarella & Olive Oil Farm of 'La Sorgente'. After walking deep into the lemon grove we will arrive at the Mozzarella Fabbricazione, where we will have a demonstration by the farmer's wife, assisted by her grandmother, in the making of buffalo mozzarella using the traditional techniques & equipment. Participants will then enter the old olive oil mill, with its large stone mill to crush the olives & purify the virgin olive oil. Participants will learn from the farmer how the local producers sell their product through a local farming co-operative.

After the demonstration we will be treated to a three-course caprese salad, tomato pasta & dessert lunch, using the freshly-made mozzarella & olive oil. For many participants the final lunch on long tables under the lemon groves, high in the hills above Sorrento, is a highlight of the tour.

14.00 Coach transfer to Naples Capodichino Airport.

15.15 E.T.A. Naples Airport. Commence check-in.

18.10 Depart Naples Airport on Easyjet Flight 2212.

19.30 E.T.A. Local Airport.
(Local time)

20.30 Coach transfer to School.

21.30 **E.T.A. School.**