The Via Appia northwards to the Domine Quo Vadis

Via Appia Antica

Along the northern stretch of the Via Appia from the Mausoleum of Caecilia Metella to the church of*Domine Quo Vadis,* you encounter several among the most important monuments that line this ancient road, beginning with the mausoleum itself, which is also one of the most representative symbols of the Appian Way.
This stretch of the road features an evocative mix of buildings and monuments of ancient, medieval and modern times.
While the Mausoleum of Caecilia Metella, the Complex of Maxentius and the Catacombs of San Callisto and San Sebastiano take us back to the imperial Roman period, the medieval Caetani Palace and the church of San Nicola, once enclosed within the walls of the Caetani Castle, hark back to the Middle Ages, and the Church of *Domine Quo Vadis* and the memorial column of Luigi Canina belong to the modern era.
The remote and more recent past unfolds before our eyes as we walk along the Appian Way, evoking now, like then, sentiments of wonder and awe.

Poi

1. The Via Appia Antica
2. Church of San Nicola
3. Mausoleum of Cecilia Metella and Castrum Caetani
4. The Villa of Maxentius
5. Basilica and catacombs of San Sebastiano
6. Catacombs of San Callisto
7. Church of Domine Quo Vadis
8. The tomb of Priscilla
9. Appia Antica Visitor Information Centre

Info

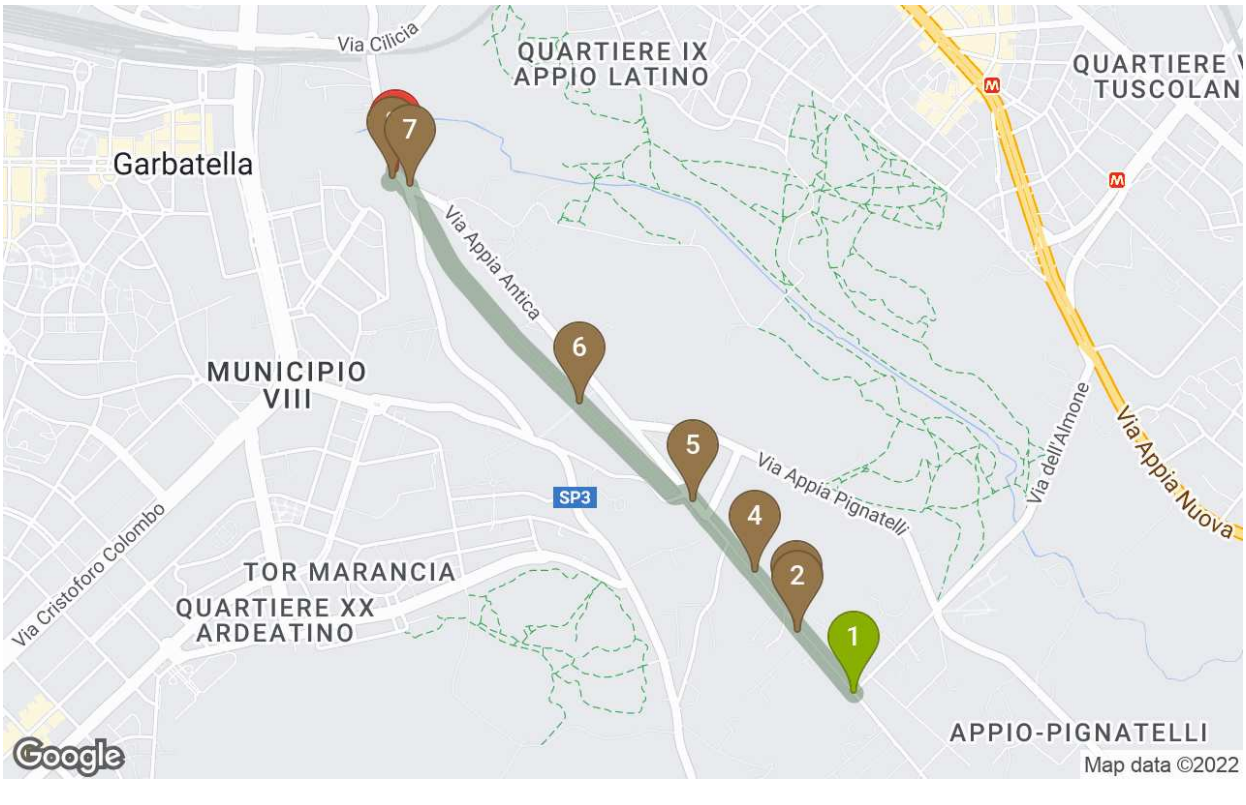
POI

9

Distance

2.67 Km

Scan the QrCode to access the navigable mobile version of the itinerary



The Via Appia Antica

Roma / Place to visit - Ancient streets

The long story of the Via Appia unfolds in space and time. With its 2300 years of history, the Appian Way bears all the signs of a remarkable and fascinating past, which are still clearly visible among the ruins that flank the road today. Great historic events and minor episodes of everyday life have played out here, in these picturesque surroundings, since the time of ancient Rome, through the Dark Ages, the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, until the decision, by Pope Pius IX, in the mid-19th century, to transform it into an open air museum.
The Via Appia began at Porta Capena, one of the gates in the Servian Wall, near the Circus Maximums, and continued southward, with a straight smooth stretch, first until Capua and, later on, to Brindisi and the Adriatic Sea. The initial part of the road is no longer visible and the main monuments can be reached through the modern Viale delle Terme di Caracalla and Via di Porta San Sebastiano. However, at the junction with the Via Ardeatina, and the church of Domine, quo vadis?, there begins a long straight extraordinarily well-preserved stretch of the old Roman road, lined with hundreds of ancient monuments.
These are just a small part of the many relics of the past that adorn this evocative expanse of Roman countryside, where the absence of buildings or natural barriers ensure an uninterrupted view of the nearby Alban Hills.
The state-owned stretch of the Appian Way runs for a length of about 12 km, from house number 195 to Frattocchie, in the commune of Marino.

Visit Duration

60 min. cc.

Address

Via Appia Antica - Roma (RM)

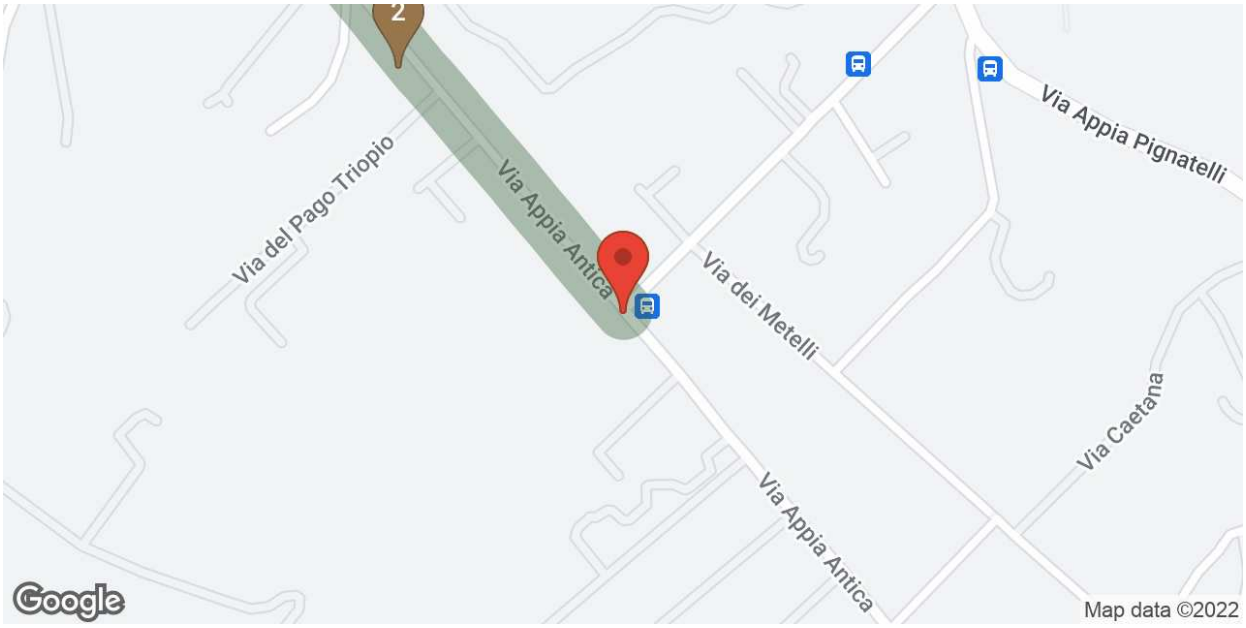
How to get

From METRO LINE B station COLOSSEO take the BUS 118 to BASILICA DI SAN SEBASTIANO stop and then walk for 7 minutes, alternatively from METRO LINE A station ARDO DI TRAVERTINO take the BUS 660 to CECILIA METELLA stop

Audioguide

Scan the QrCode to access the Listen to the audioguide

1 The Via Appia Antica
2 Church of San Nicola
3 Mausoleum of Cecilia Metella and Castrum Caetani
4 The Villa of Maxentius
5 Basilica and catacombs of San Sebastiano
6 Catacombs of San Callisto
7 Church of Domine Quo Vadis
8 The tomb of Priscilla
9 Appia Antica Visitor Information Centre



Map / Street View

Poi 1

Church of San Nicola

Roma / Place to visit - Churches

The church of San Nicola is situated inside the *Castrum Caetani*, the stronghold built at the beginning of the 14th century by Pope Boniface VIII, who was a member of this noble Roman family. This stronghold had a square layout and was surrounded by a wall. Inside, according to an inventory preserved in the Torlonia archive, it contained about 50 houses, gardens, farmland and two churches, one of which was dedicated to St. Nicholas.
Of the original church, only the outer walls survive today, together with a bell gable that dominates the facade; the gable roof has also been lost. The walls feature eight buttresses per side and pointed arch windows with marble cornices, restored in the early 20th century. The building is a rare example of Gothic church in Rome; its main features, such as the effect of the light, which deceptively dilates the interior space, the pointed arch windows and the presence of buttresses all refer to the French Gothic style.

Visit Duration

10 min.

Address

Via Appia Antica, 161 - Roma (RM)

How to get

From METRO LINE B station COLOSSEO take the BUS 118 to BASILICA DI SAN SEBASTIANO stop, alternatively from METRO LINE A station ARCO DI TRAVERTINO take the BUS 660 to CECILIA METELLA stop.

Audioguide

Scan the QrCode to access the Listen to the audioguide

1 The Via Appia Antica
2 Church of San Nicola
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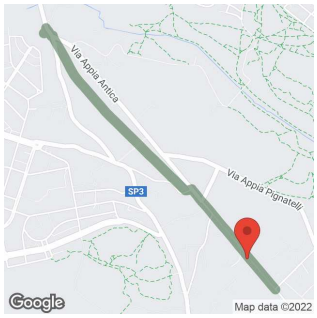
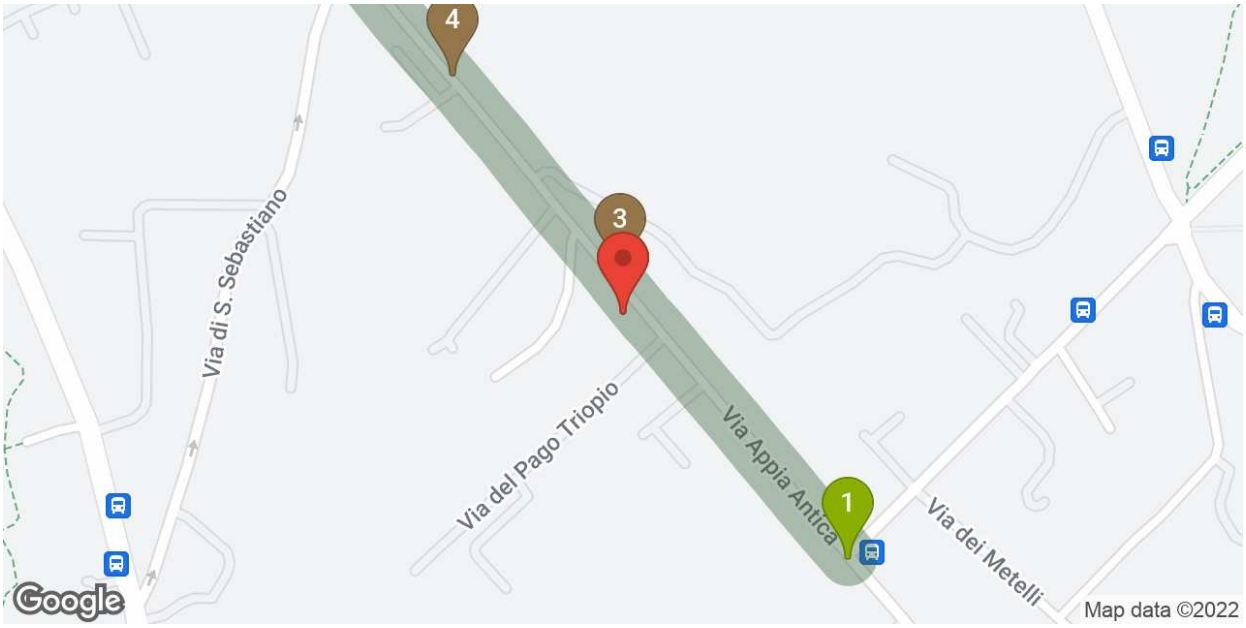
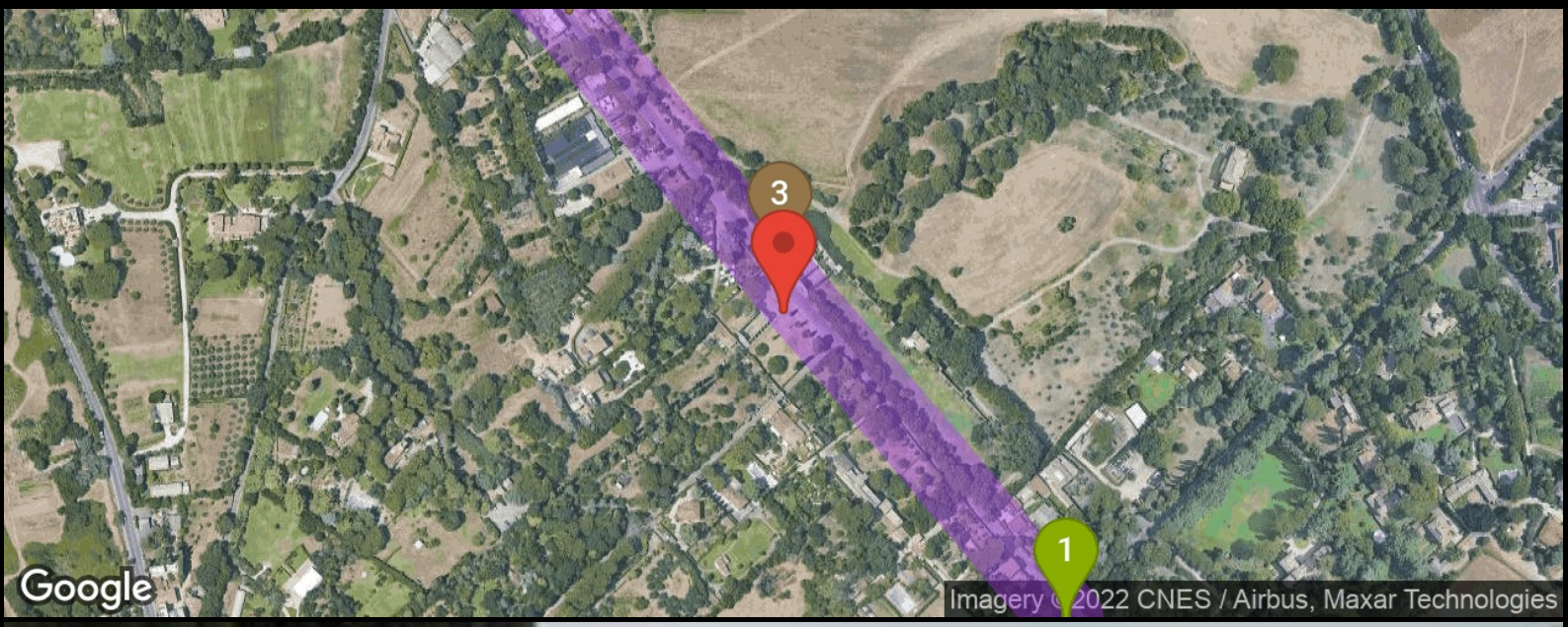
6 Catacombs of San Callisto
7 Church of Domine Quo Vadis
8 The tomb of Priscilla
9 Appia Antica Visitor Information Centre





Map / Street View

Poi 2



Mausoleum of Cecilia Metella and Castrum Caetani

Roma / Place to visit - Archaeological areas

The Mausoleum of Caecilia Metella is one of the most well-known monuments flanking the Via Appia. Built between 30 and 20 BC, at the 3 mile marker of the road, about 300 m south of the complex built by the emperor Maxentius, it still has the power to impress visitors today, because of its size and elegance, and also because of the added attraction of having been converted, in the Middle Ages, into a stronghold, a sort of fortified palace, which is still in good condition.
Externally the tomb has the shape of a cylindrical drum entirely clad with slabs of travertine, resting on a square podium of which only the concrete core of flint has survived. Inside, the conical burial chamber, open to the sky at the top (*oculus*), contained the body of a wealthy Roman noblewoman belonging to one of the city's aristocratic families and probably the daughter-in-law of the famous Marcus Licinius Crassus, a member, with Caesar and Pompey of the 1st triumvirate in 59 BC.
This twofold archaeological site features not just the tomb of Caecilia Metella, but also the remains of a fortified palace built at the beginning of the 14th century by the Caetani family, after it bought the land on which the monument rises (called Capo di Bove, or "ox head", due to the ox skulls adorning the frieze at the top of the tomb) and decided to fortify the tomb by encircling it with a wall and building a palace, church and tower inside, the tower being raised on top of the Roman tomb.
Today, the residential part of the stronghold, with its typical battlemented wall and mullioned windows, hosts the Appian Museum and its collection of statues, sarcophagi, inscriptions and reliefs from the funerary monuments along the Via Appia.

Services

- Info point
- Restroom

Opening Hours

09:00 - 18:30	On weekends mandatory reservation at least one day in advance by calling 067886254 during opening hours.

Audioguide

Scan the QrCode to access the Listen to the audioguide

Closing Days

Monday

Info

Admission fee

Opening hours:
from Tuesday to Sunday from 9.00 to 18.30 pm with last entrance half an hour before closing.

Visits on weekends must be booked by phone at least one day in advance.
Reservations for the weekend by calling 067886254 during opening hours.

Closing days:
Monday, 25 December, 1 January.

Visit Duration

30 min.

Address

Via Appia Antica 161 - Roma (RM)

How to get
From METRO LINE B station COLOSSEO take the BUS 118 to BASILICA S. SEBASTIANO stop, alternatively from METRO LINE A station ARCO DI TRAVERTINO take the BUS 660 to CECILIA METELLA stop.

1. The Via Appia Antica
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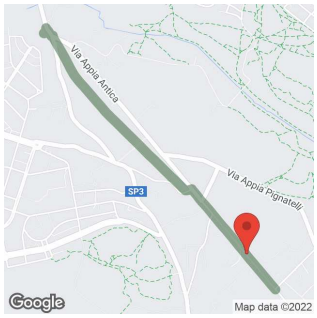
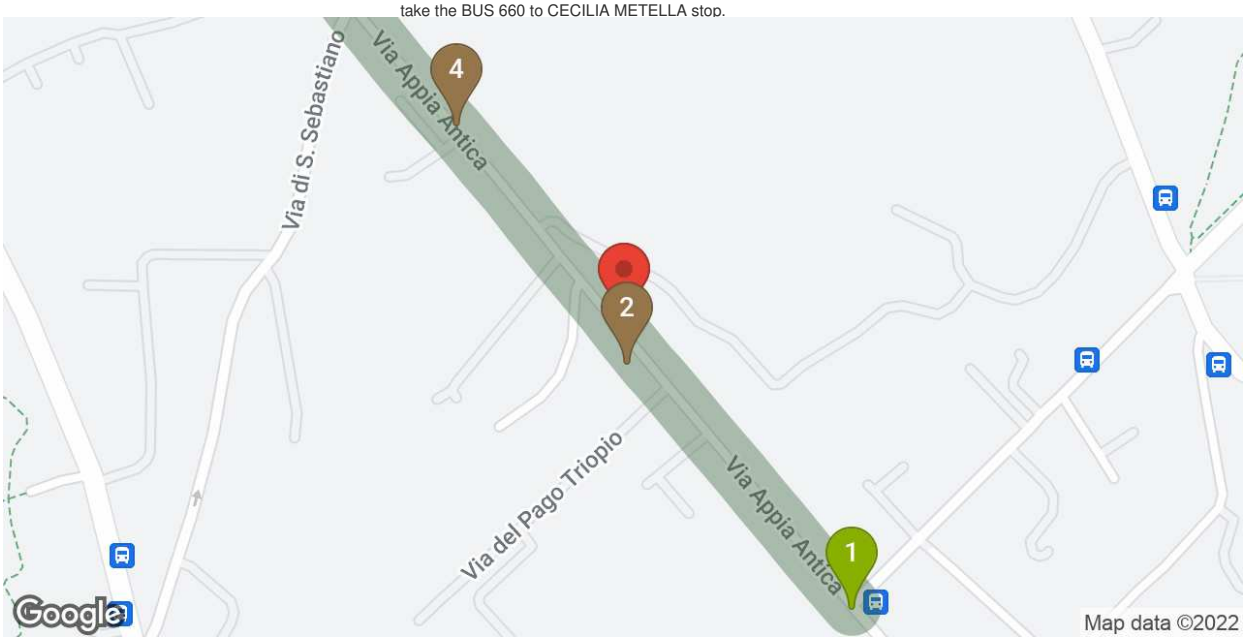
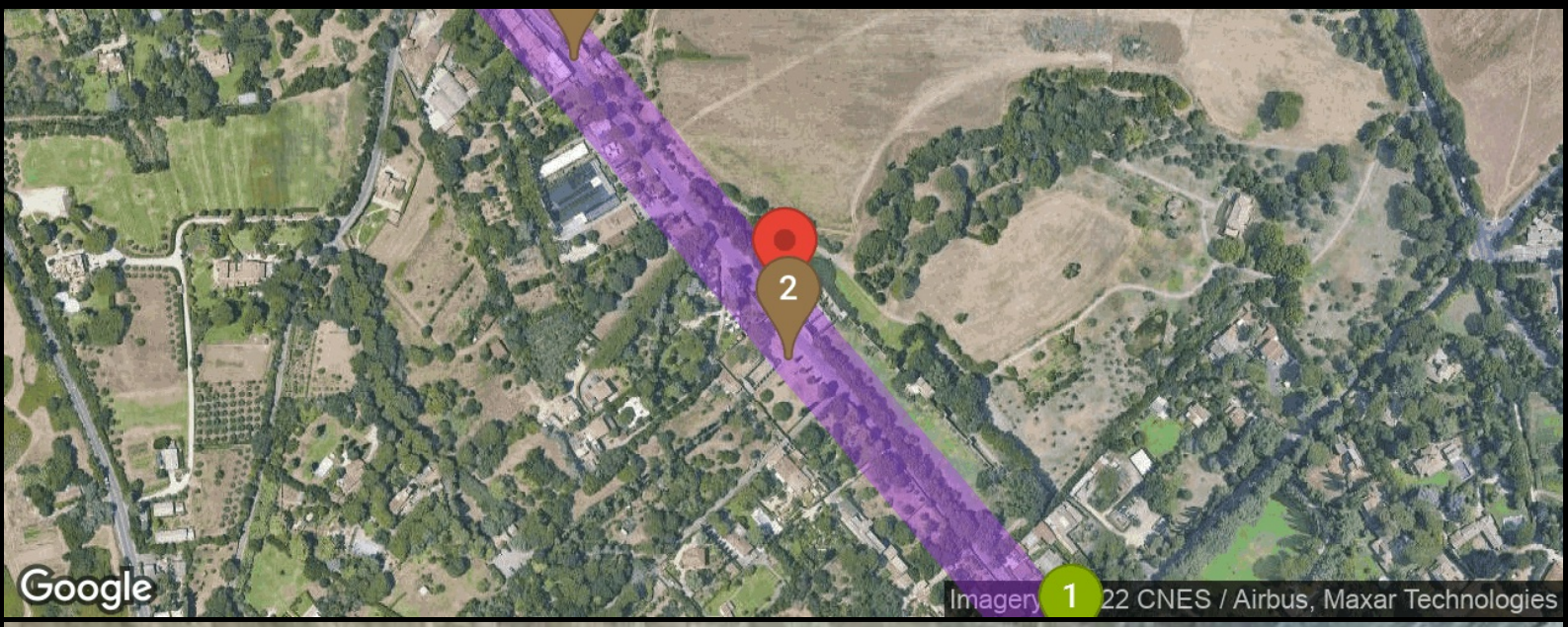
6. Catacombs of San Callisto
7. Church of Domine Quo Vadis
8. The tomb of Priscilla
9. Appia Antica Visitor Information Centre





Map / Street View

Poi 3



The Villa of Maxentius

Roma / Place to visit - Archaeological areas

The impressive remains visible between the Basilica of San Sebastiano and the Tomb of Caecilia Metella belong to the huge Roman residential complex built by the emperor Maxentius between AD 308 and 312. The archaeological area features the Mausoleum of Romulus (from the name of the emperor's young son, who died in AD 309), the remains of the palace quarters and the Circus, used for horse racing, which could seat over 10,000 spectators. The Palace of Maxentius reused a previous building of which four construction stages are known, from the late Republican period (2nd - 1st century BC) onwards. Significant alterations were made in the 2nd century AD, almost certainly, based on modern evidence, by the wealthy Athenian orator Herodes Atticus, who owned a vast estate at the 3rd mile of the Appian Way, which the sources refer to as *Triopius*.

Services

- Info point
- Restroom

Info

Opening hours:
10.00 - 16.00.

Closing days:
Monday, 1 January, 1 May, 25 December.

Visit Duration

60 min.

Address

Via Appia Antica 153 - Roma (RM)

How to get

From METRO LINE B station COLOSSEO take the BUS 118 to BASILICA S. SEBASTIANO stop and then walk for 5 minutes.

Audioguide

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1 The Via Appia Antica
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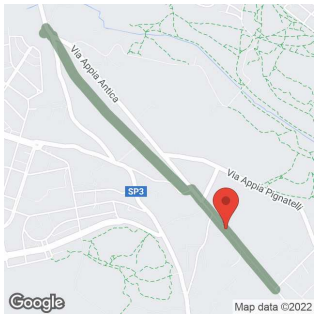
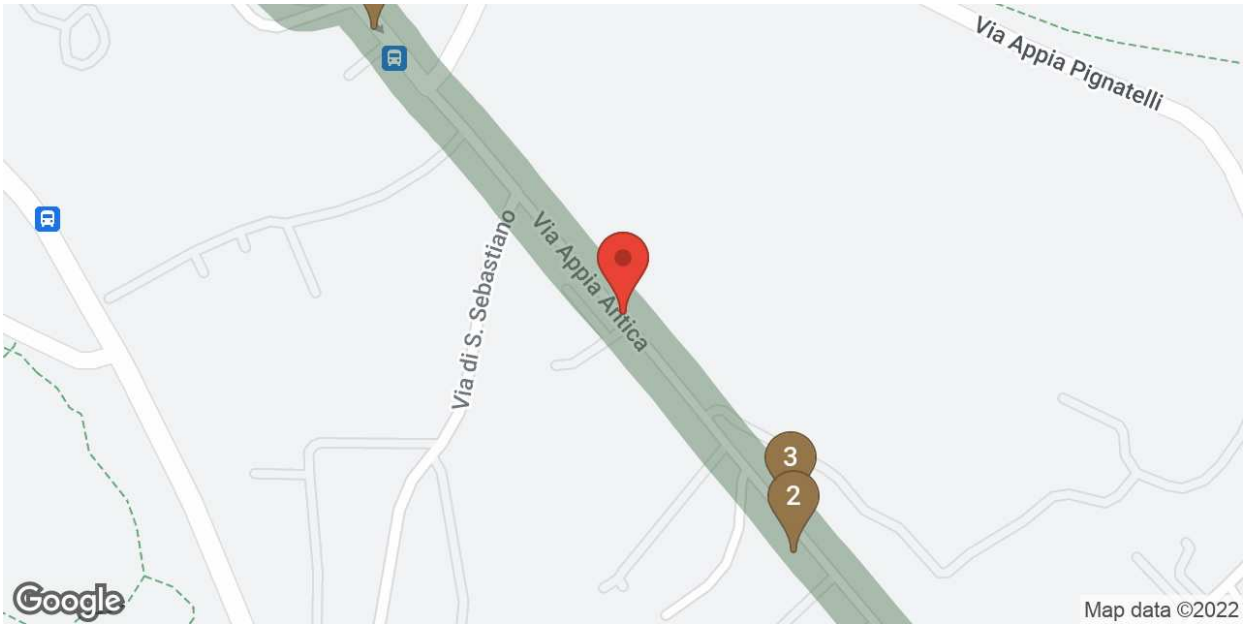
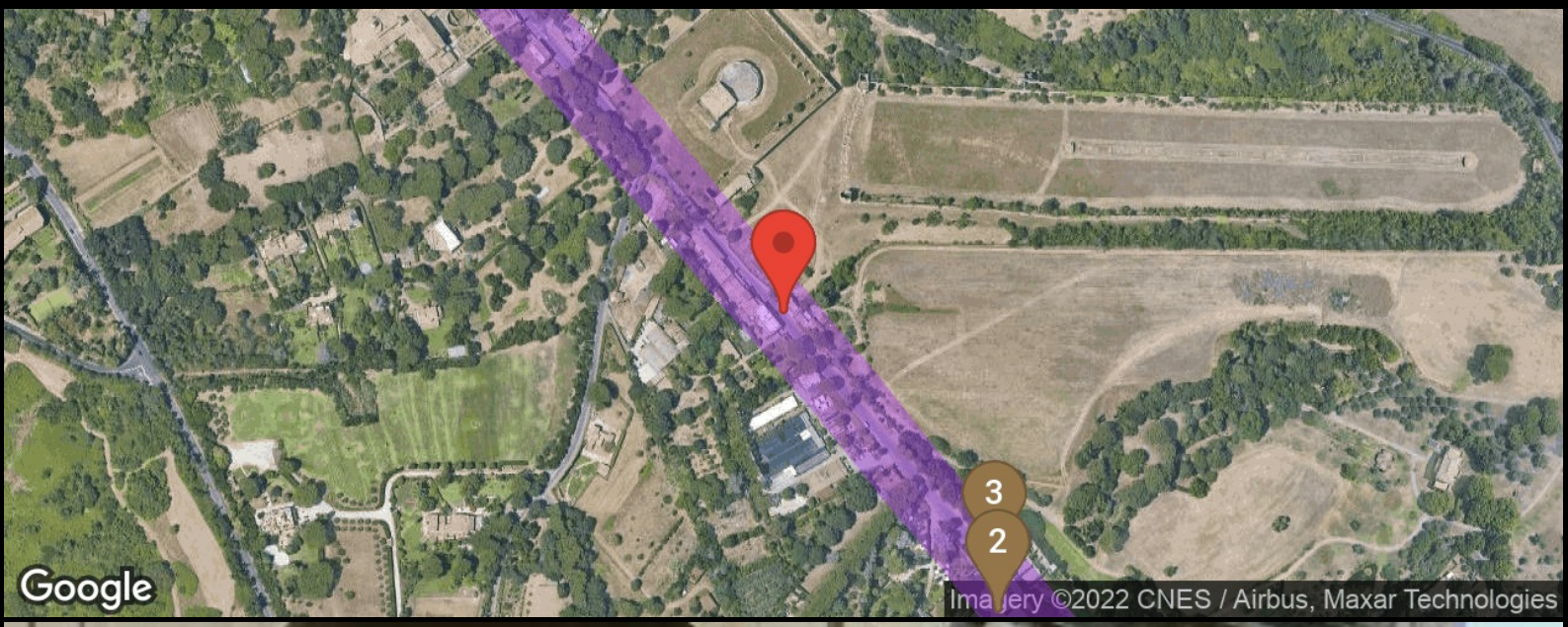
5 Basilica and catacombs of San Sebastiano
6 Catacombs of San Callisto
7 Church of Domine Quo Vadis
8 The tomb of Priscilla
9 Appia Antica Visitor Information Centre





Map / Street View

Poi 4



Basilica and catacombs of San Sebastiano

Roma / Place to visit - Catacumbs

Between the Catacombs of San Callisto and the complex of Maxentius, is a Basilica dedicated to Saint Sebastian, the most important Christian pilgrimage site on this initial stretch of the Via Appia, so important as to give its name to gate in the Aurelian Walls through which the Appian Way left the city. The complex is named for the early Christian martyr who was buried nearby in the 3rd century AD, and was originally called the "*Basilica of the Memory of the Apostles*", due to its association with the joint cult of the apostles Peter and Paul.
The location, which was chosen for a large Christian burial ground from the 1st century AD, was originally called ad catacumbas (from a Greek word meaning "close to the cavity"), due to presence of pozzolan mines. The catacombs of San Sebastiano, which, over the centuries, had become the most important in Rome, subsequently gave the name to all the other underground cemeteries in Rome.
The Basilica, erected in the 4th century AD, features the typical circus-shaped ground plan of the Constantinian basilicas and was used in the first centuries of its history primarily as a cemetery church. In front of the basilica of S. Sebastiano there rises a column surmounted by a cross. On the base of the column is a coat of arms and an inscription commemorating the restoration of the Via Appia Antica by the architect Luigi Canina, commissioned by pope Pius IX in mid-19th century.

Services

- Café / Restaurant
- Drinking water
- Restroom

Info

Opening hours:
10.00 - 16.30 last entrance. Closing time is 17.00.

Closing days:
Sunday, 25 December, 1 January, the whole month of December.

Visit Duration

45 min.

Address

Via Appia Antica 136 - Roma (RM)

How to get

From METRO LINE B station COLOSSEO take the BUS 118 to BASILICA DI S. SEBASTIANO stop.

Audioguide

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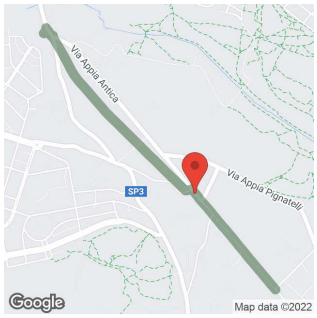
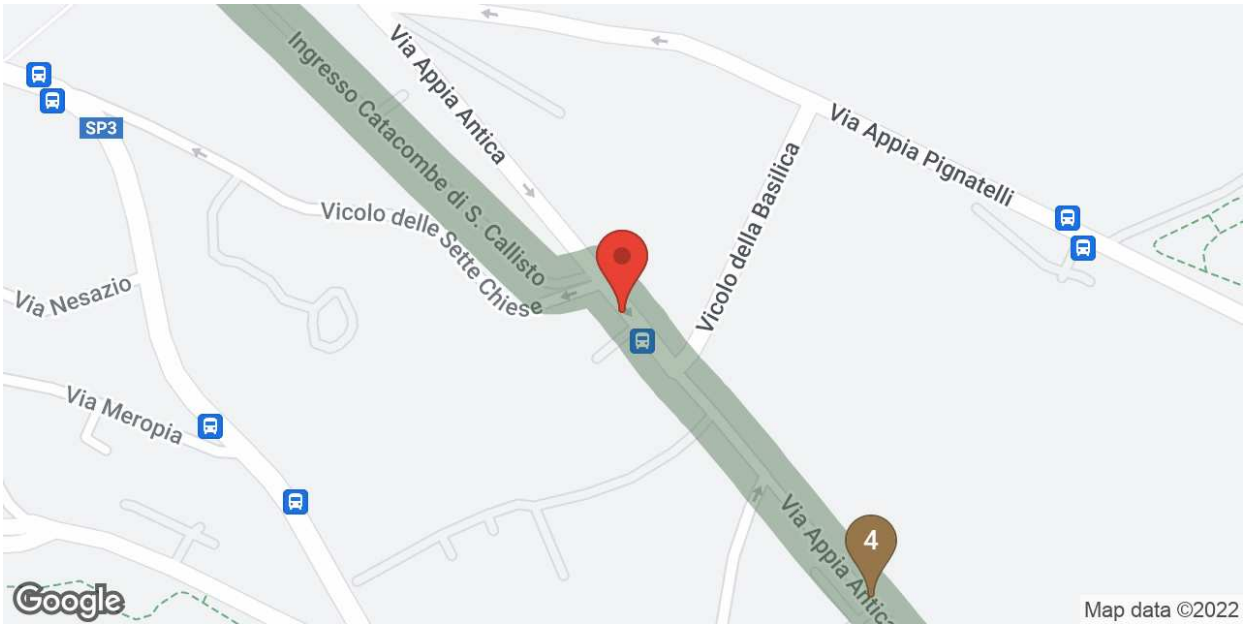
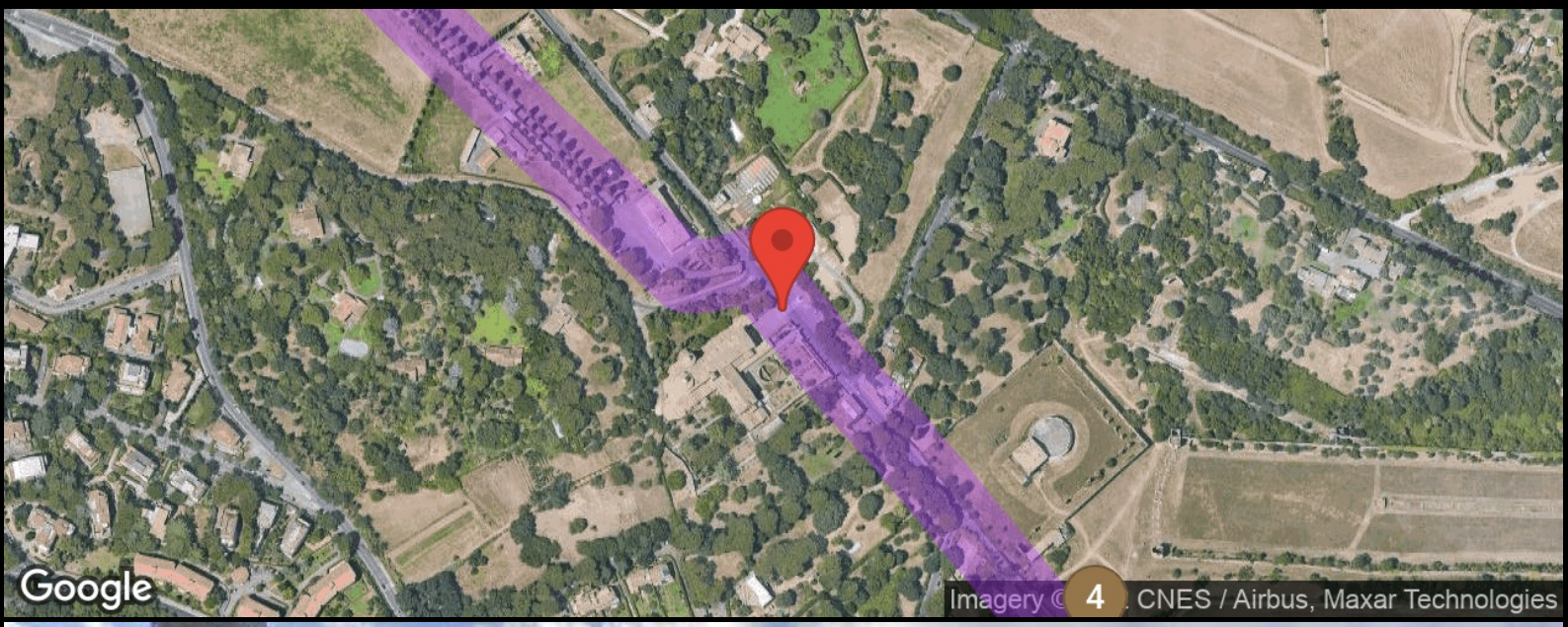
6 Catacombs of San Callisto
7 Church of Domine Quo Vadis
8 The tomb of Priscilla
9 Appia Antica Visitor Information Centre





Map / Street View

Poi 5



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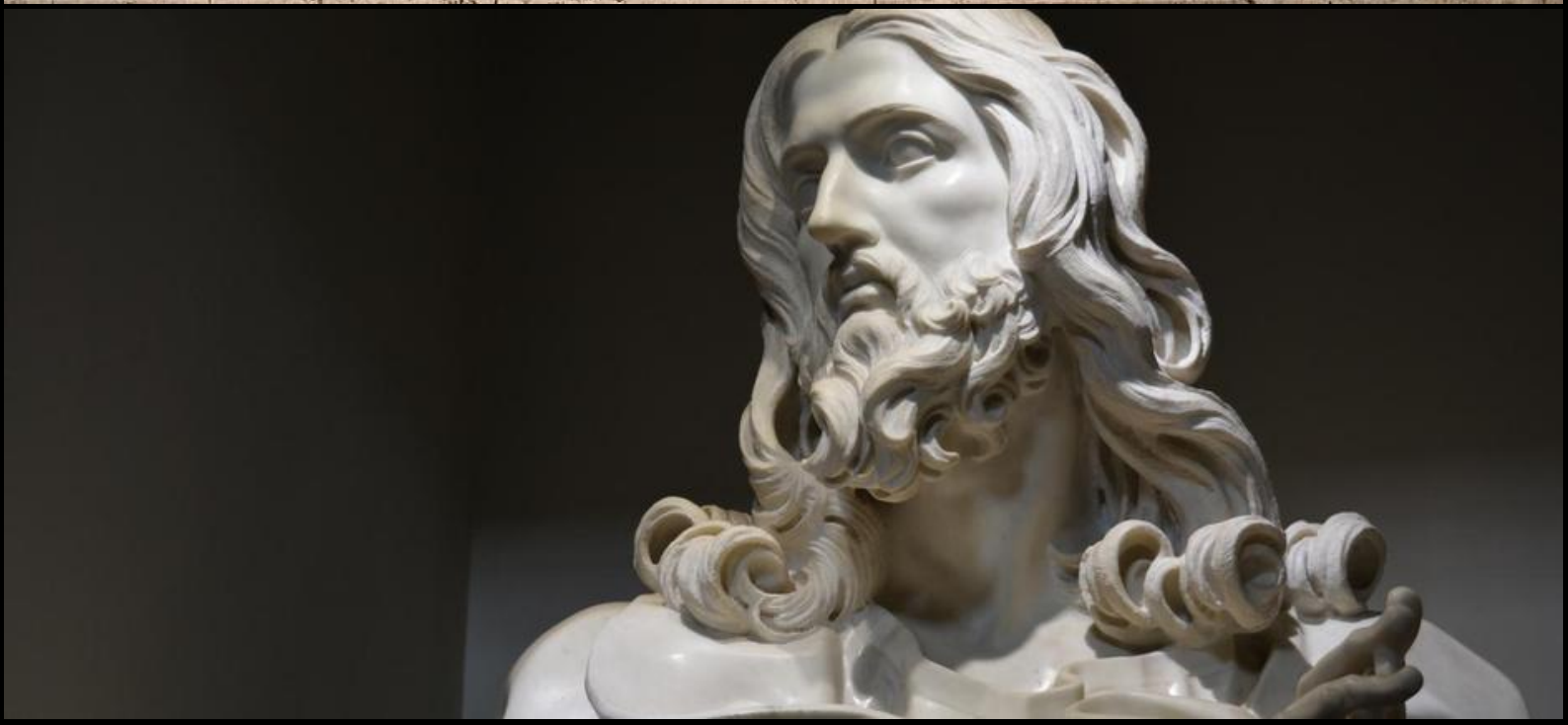

Catacombs of San Callisto

Roma / Place to visit - Catacumbs

Half way between the church of Domine Quo Vadis and the Basilica of San Sebastiano, are the Catacombs of San Callisto, the first collective burial ground in Rome to be mentioned in the ancient sources. The catacombs are named for the deacon and future pope Callixtus, who was appointed guardian of the cemetery by pope Zephyrinus, between 198 and 217, as a place in which the faithful could “rest” together (from the Greek "koimao", to sleep) while awaiting the day of Resurrection. They are the biggest catacombs in Rome and also contain many martyrs, 16 popes and hundreds of ordinary Christians. The warren of tunnels and caves, covering an overall area of approx. 72,000 square metres, was laid out according to a grid plan, with parallel corridors and connecting corridors at right angles, as a mass burial ground featuring purposely-designed standard tombs. There are various areas, dating back to different periods, and indicating that the catacombs were progressively extended over the decades. The oldest core is the part closest to the Via Appia, known as the "crypts of Lucina", the Roman matron who, according to the historical sources, buried pope Cornelius there in AD 253. Of great importance is the so-called "crypt of the Popes", which contains the burials of a number of high-ranking churchmen, the most important of which is pope Sixtus II, who died a martyr in AD 258. In the 4th century AD, pope Damasus (366-384) ordered the refurbishment of the catacombs, with the creation of a devotional route and the decoration of the most venerated tombs, with the addition of inscriptions and dedications celebrating the popes and martyrs.

Services

- Drinking water
- Restroom

Info

Opening hours:
10.30 - 12.00 then 14.00 to 17.00
Closing day:
Wednesday; entire month of February.

Visit Duration

45 min.

Address

Via Appia Antica 126 - Roma (RM)

How to get

From METRO LINE B station COLOSSEO take BUS 118 to DOMINE QUO VADIS stop, alternatively to BASILICA DI SAN SEBASTIANO stop.

Audioguide

Scan the QrCode to access the Listen to the audioguide

1 The Via Appia Antica
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6 Catacombs of San Callisto
7 Church of Domine Quo Vadis
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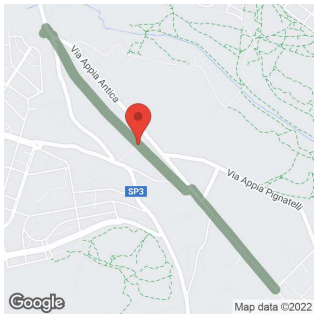
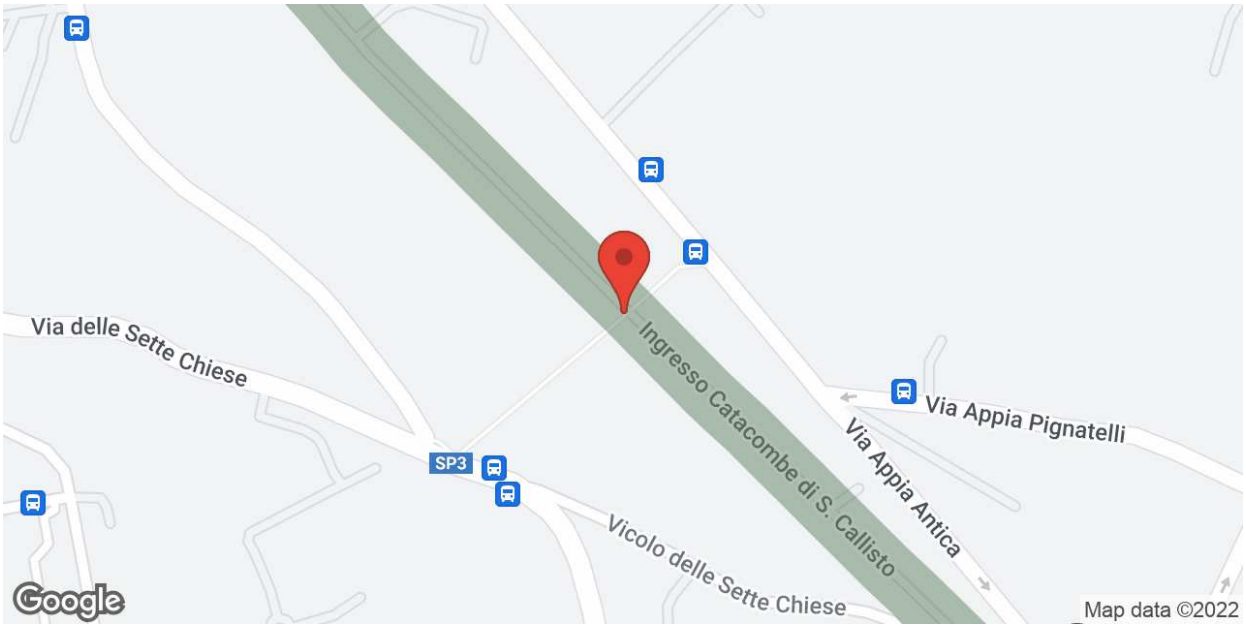
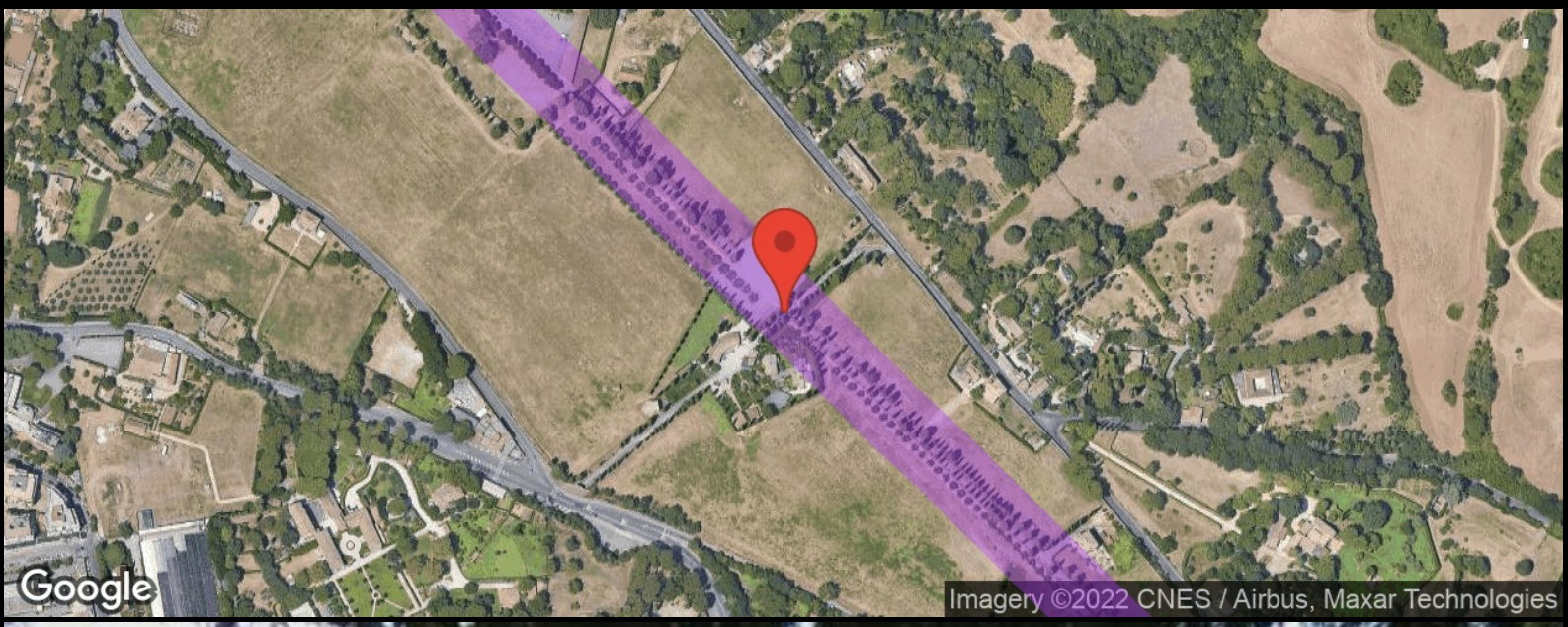




Map / Street View

Poi 6



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A CONSTITVTIONE·COLLEGII·ANNO·XXX

BIGLIETTI
TICKETS

Church of Domine Quo Vadis

Roma / Place to visit - Churches

Located where the modern Via Ardeatina branches off the Via Appia, the small church of *Domine Quo Vadis* has been a pilgrimage attraction for centuries. Tradition has it that this is the site where Jesus appeared to Peter, who was fleeing Nero's persecution in Rome; when Peter asked him “Lord, where are you going?” (*Domine quo vadis*?), he replied “I am going to Rome to be crucified again”.
A shrine was built on this spot in the ninth century, although the current church dates to the 16th and 17th centuries. The church is also known as St. Mary “of the footprints”, because of a marble slab with two footprints kept there, said to be those of Jesus Christ (actually, a pagan Roman “*ex voto*”, the original of which is preserved in the Basilica of San Sebastiano).

Visit Duration

15 min.

Address

Via Appia Antica 47 - Roma (RM)

How to get

From METRO LINE B station COLOSSEO take BUS 118 to APPIA ANTICA/DOMINE QUO VADIS stop.

Audioguide

Scan the QrCode to access the Listen to the audioguide

1 The Via Appia Antica
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4 The Villa of Maxentius
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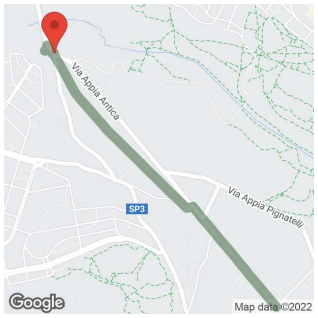
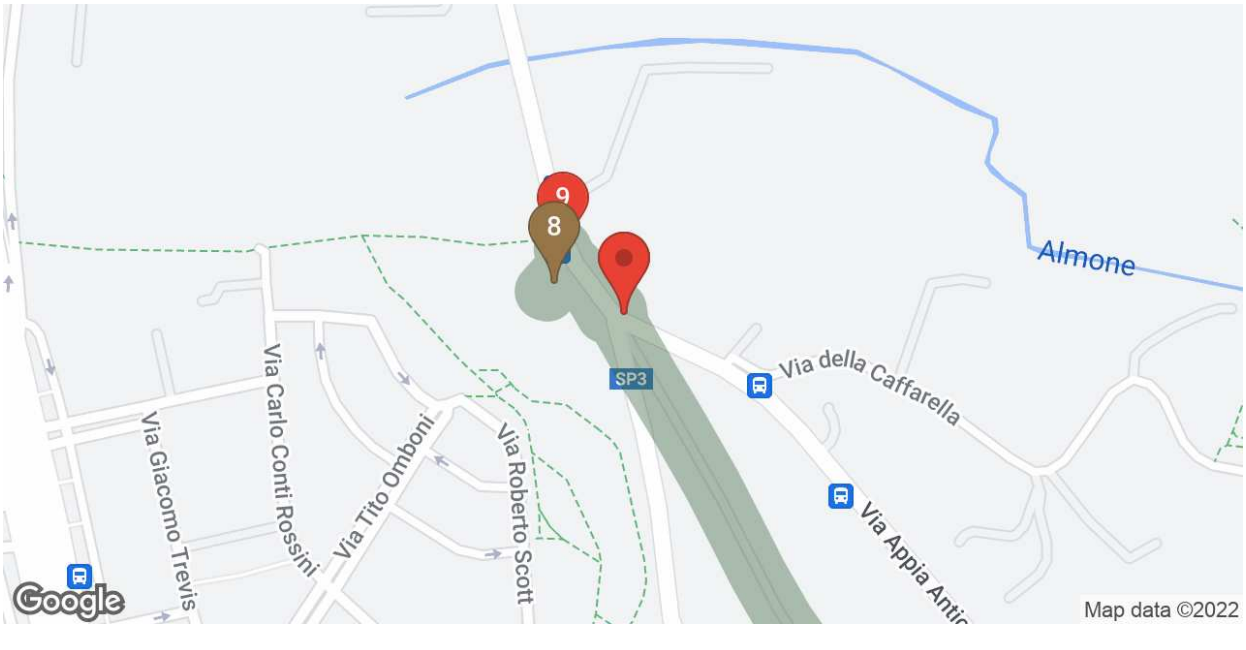
7 Church of Domine Quo Vadis
8 The tomb of Priscilla
9 Appia Antica Visitor Information Centre





Map / Street View

Poi 7

CATACOMBE
SAN SEBASTIANO

The tomb of Priscilla

Roma / Place to visit - Tombs

Almost opposite the church of *Domine Quo Vadis*, on the other side of the Via Appia, is a cylindrical 11th century tower, built on top of a monumental Roman tomb. The tomb itself was built by Titus Flavius Abascantus, a freedman of the emperor Domitian, for his wife Priscilla, who died prematurely in the middle of the 1st century AD. The huge square podium is hidden behind the surrounding Medieval buildings.

Visit Duration

5 min.

Address

Via Appia Antica 76 - Roma (RM)

How to get

From METRO LINE B station COLOSSEO take the BUS 118 to DOMINE QUO VADIS stop.

Audioguide

Scan the QrCode to access the Listen to the audioguide

1 The Via Appia Antica
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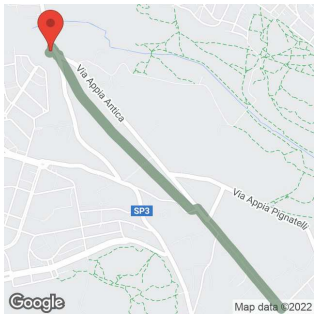
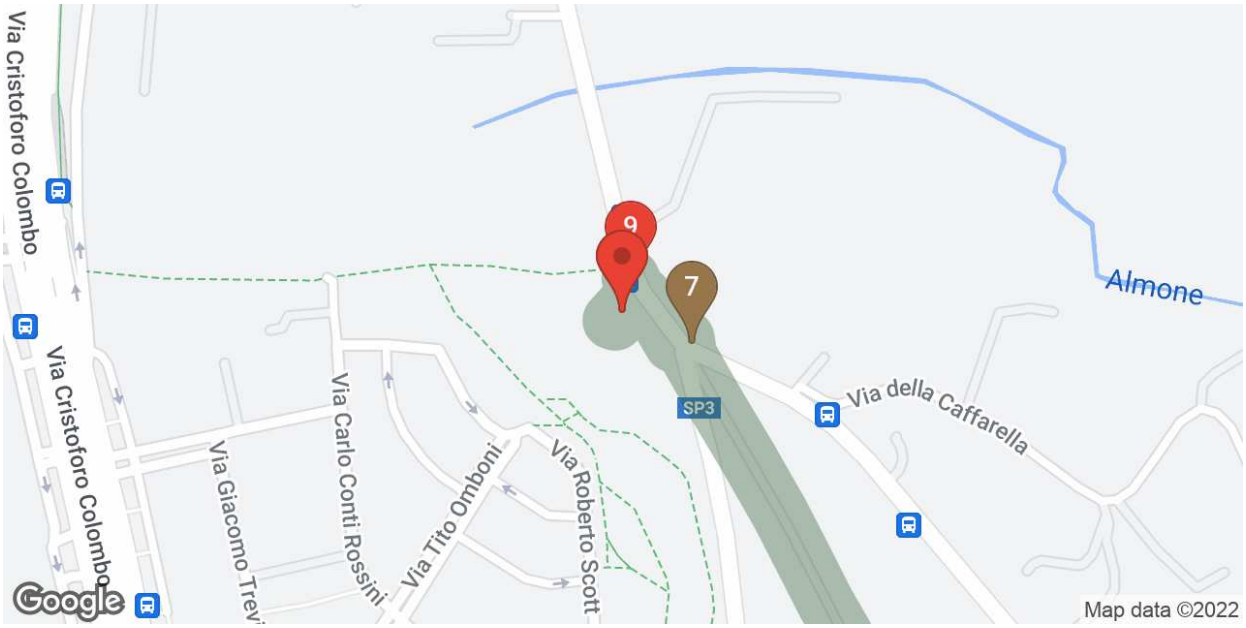
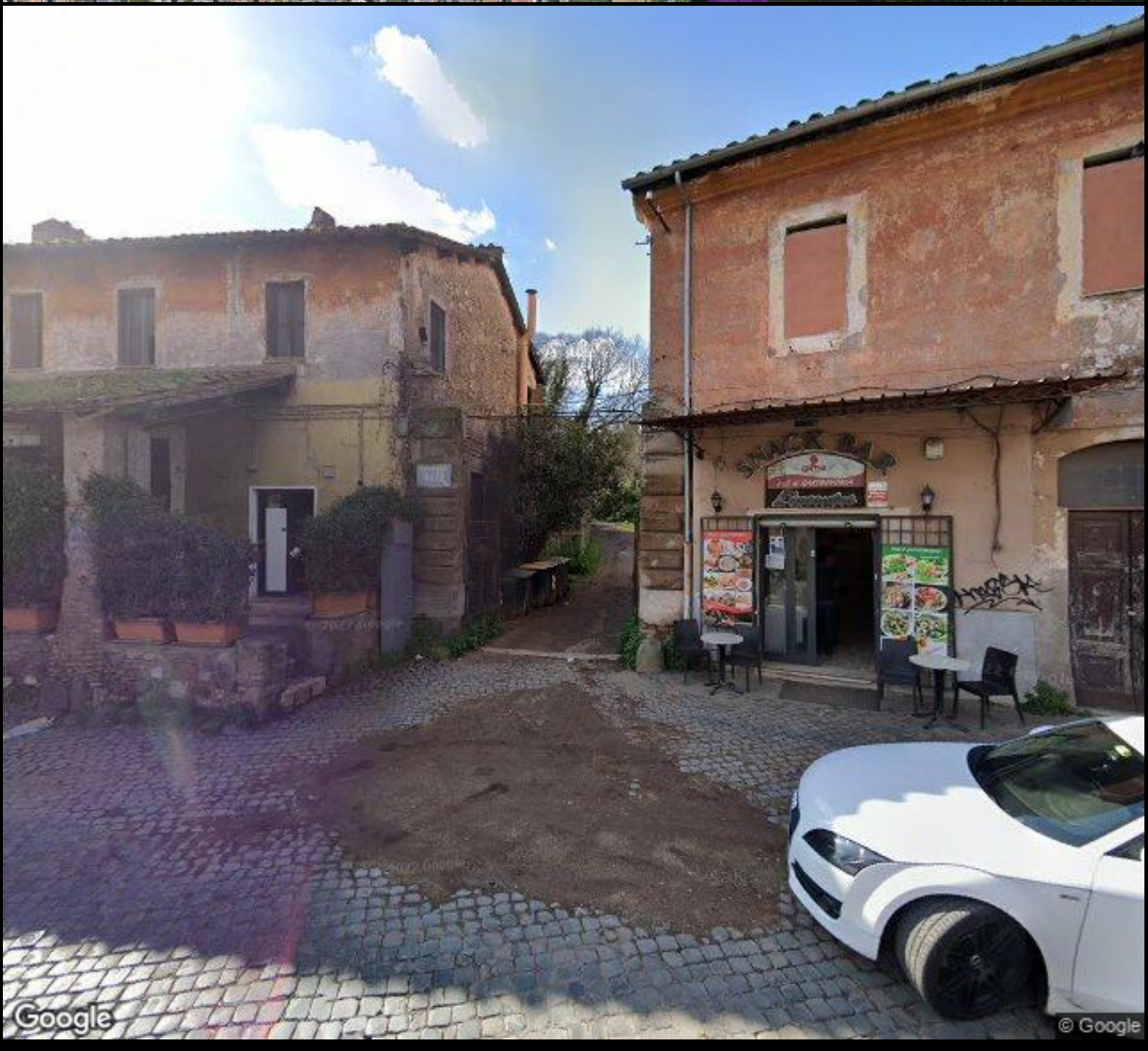




Map / Street View

Poi 8



Poi 9

Appia Antica Visitor Information Centre

Roma / Tourist Services - Info Point

The Info point, the management of which has been awarded by the Regional Park of the Appia Antica to EcoBike Srl, supplies information materials, welcomes tourists, provides a bike hiring service and a guided reservations for nature and archaeological tours (walking, bike and electric minicar tours), also in foreign languages. For further info visit https://www.infopointappia.it/

Services

- Bike rental
- Info point

Info

Open every day:
November - February: Monday-Friday 9.30-13 / 14-17.30
Saturday and Sunday 9.30-17.30
March - October: Monday-Friday 9.30-13 / 14-18.30
Saturday and Sunday 9.30-19.30

Visit Duration

5 min.

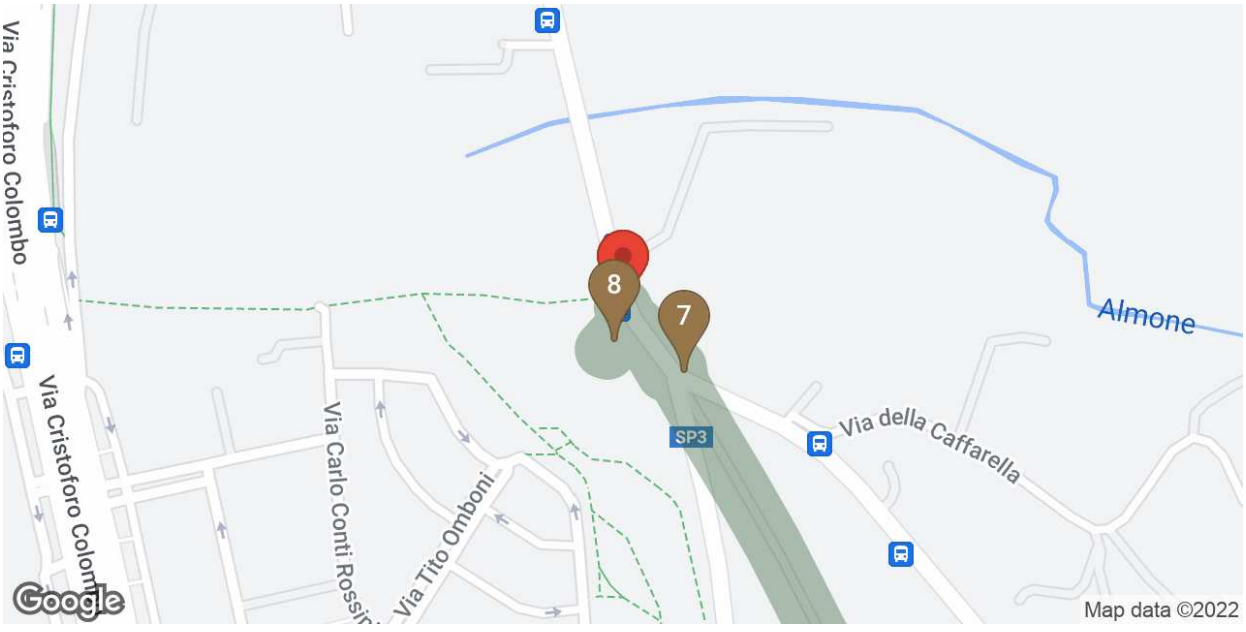
Address

Via Appia Antica 58/60 - Roma (RM)

How to get

From METRO LINE B station COLOSSEO take BUS 118 to APPIA ANTICA/DOMINE QUO VADIS stop, alternatively from METRO LINE A station SAN GIOVANNI take the BUS 218 to APPIA ANTICA/DOMINE QUO VADIS stop.

1 The Via Appia Antica
2 Church of San Nicola
3 Mausoleum of Cecilia Metella and Castrum Caetani
4 The Villa of Maxentius
5 Basilica and catacombs of San Sebastiano
6 Catacombs of San Callisto
7 Church of Domine Quo Vadis
8 The tomb of Priscilla
9 Appia Antica Visitor Information Centre



Map / Street View

Poi 9

AFFITTO BICICLETTE
RENT-A-BIKE