



The Via Appia from Santa Maria delle Mole to Via delle Capanne di Marino

Via Appia Antica

This itinerary coincides with the 10th mile of the Via Appia Antica and is located in the communes of Marino and Ciampino. One of the least known sections of the Appian Way, in ancient times it was lined with many tombs and more utilitarian buildings, only a few remains of which have survived.

The itinerary begins at Santa Maria delle Mole; the first monument you come to is an interesting bath-house, in good state of preservation, which must have been very popular, in Roman times, with the many travellers along the Appian Way. After underpassing the Rome-Velletri railroad, built during the reign of pope Pius IX, you come to a huge tomb known as "La Mola" (the Mill), its size probably reflecting the status of its owner. Alongside the archaeological remains, the itinerary is also interesting for its natural features, such as the Fosso del Cipollaro, one of the many streams that cross the Archaeological Park of the Appia Antica, named for the onion crops typically grown in the surrounding fields until the mid-20th century.

From Via delle Capanne di Marino you may continue the itinerary northwards by following the map.



POI



Distance

8

1.57 Km

Poi

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

Poi 1

Via Appia Antica - Santa Maria delle Mole

Marino / Place to visit - Ancient streets

Santa Maria delle Mole is a town in the commune of Marino, on the Via Appia Nuova and the Rome-Velletri railway. The landscape here is mostly flat except for some low hills, such as the Colle della Falcognana, and is crossed by several small streams, such as the Fosso di Fiorano. The origin of the name is traditionally associated with the discovery, in the area of a small statue of the Virgin Mary, who later became the patron saint of the town, and a pair of millstones, from one of the many flour mills ("mole" in Italian) that were built along the banks of the Fosso di Fiorano. In ancient times, not far from here, rose the Latin settlement of *Mugilla*, of which there are only a few remains on a hill near the Colle della Falcognana. Near Santa Maria delle Mole, at Frattocchie, are the ruins of *Bovillae*, the first town encountered by ancient travellers on the Via Appia after leaving Rome. Established as a colony of Alba Longa, *Bovillae* was a member of the Latin League and, after being defeated by Rome, became a Roman municipality. Its importance, in ancient times, was due to its location on one of the most important roads in the whole Empire.

After the Via Appia Antica fell into disrepair, *Bovillae* too inexorably declined, although it continued to be inhabited until the 9th century. However, it never recovered from the sacking and destruction perpetrated by the Saracens in AD 846, after which it disappeared from history.

During the Middle Ages the area of the former *Bovillae* became the property of the Savelli family, and later of the Orsini and Colonna. The excavations carried out in the area of *Bovillae* during the 19th century have unearthed a circus, erected by Tiberius, in the 1st century AD, for the commemorative games in honour of his predecessor Augustus.

Several arches of the starting gates, or *carceres*, remain. Until the mid-20th century, the area of Santa Maria delle Mole was mostly used as grazing land for sheep, and vineyards, but over the last decades it has rapidly expanded and has now become one of the most populated and lively towns in the commune of Marino.



Address

Viale della Repubblica - Marino (RM)

How to get

From ROMA TERMINI railway station take train direction VELLETRI to SANTA MARIA DELLE MOLE stop.

Poi 2

Bath complex

Marino / Place to visit - Archaeological areas

A bath complex of the Roman imperial period has been found in this area, probably because of the presence of natural springs of sulphur water. Its proximity to the road and the well-worn thresholds have convinced archaeologists that the baths were probably open to the public and very popular. The materials found during the excavations, including coins with the effigy of members of the imperial family, attest to the continuous use of the building from the 1st to the 3rd century AD.

The baths featured a number of rooms, which still preserve the typical floor and pool heating system used by the Romans, with the remains of marble-clad hot and cold water pools. In Roman baths, in fact, people could bathe in hot, warm and cold pools, as they pleased, located in different rooms.



Address

Via Appia Antica - Marino (RM)

How to get

From ROMA TERMINI train station, take a train that stops at SANTA MARIA DELLE MOLE then walk towards the Via Appia Antica.

Poi 3

Via Appia Antica - railway underpass

Roma / Place to visit - Ancient streets

The Rome-Velletri railway was built in the mid-19th century, as the first stretch of a longer line linking Rome to Naples. It was commissioned by pope Pius IX, who was elected to the papal



Address

Via Appia Antica - Marino - Roma (RM)

How to get

From ROMA TERMINI railway station take the train direction VELLETRI to SANTA MARIA DELLE MOLE stop and then walk towards the Via Appia Antica

throne in 1846 and who decided to built four railway lines, in the name of progress.

The first, from Rome to Ceprano, a town then on the border with the Kingdom of Naples, was completed in 1862 and joined to the line to Naples in 1864. The first stop on this line was Ciampino, where it then split into two: one branch reached Frascati, the other Ceprano, where it then joined with the railway from Naples. The trains were originally steam powered, until the line was electrified in 1948.

The stretch from Rome to Cecchina was inaugurated on 3 July 1859 by Pius IX himself, riding on a new train which is preserved and can be seen at the Centrale Montemartini museum in Rome. It is a true work of art on wheels, costing 140 thousand francs at the time. The train, used by Pius IX from 1859 until 1870, consists of three luxury carriages, one designed as a special carriage for public blessings, the second as a private apartment, and the third as a sumptuous chapel. At the time of the construction of the railway, between 1856 and 1859, the small bridge and pedestrian underpath beneath the Via Appia Antica, at Santa Maria delle Mole, were also built.

The Board of Antiquities, at the time, strongly opposed the railway because it would have interrupted the sweeping view of the recently restored ancient road. The basalt paving of the Appia is still very well preserved in this stretch. It is about 4 metres wide and still features the 3 metre wide raised pedestrian pavements at the sides. The Velletri – Colferro and Velletri – Priverno sections of the railway were discontinued in 1957, leaving only the Rome – Velletri and Priverno – Terracina sections.

Poi 4

The "Mola Tomb" and remains of a funerary enclosure

Roma / Place to visit - Tombs

This is the 10th milestone of the Via Appia. This building was a huge circular tomb with a diameter of 23 metres, dating to the Augustan period (between the end of the 1st century BC and the beginning of the 1st century AD), and was probably surmounted by a conical structure, with steps leading to the top. The burial chamber inside is accessed directly from the road, which is a rather unusual feature, and made of blocks of peperino stone. It contains three cells arranged in the form of a Greek cross.

Based on the 19th century drawings of the tomb, archaeologists have surmised that the brickwork base was decorated with elegant semi-column motifs, framing alternating rectangular and semi-circular niches. Between the "Mola Tomb" and the railway, excavations carried out in 1985 have unearthed several peperino stonework structures identified as part of a funerary enclosure.



Address

Via Appia Antica - Roma (RM)

How to get

From the ROMA TERMINI train station take the train direction VELLETRI to SANTA MARIA DELLE MOLE stop and then walk for about 2 minutes towards the Via Appia Antica.

Poi 5

Multi-level tomb

Roma / Place to visit - Tombs

At the 11th milestone of the Appian Way, about 400 metres after crossing the Fiorano (or del Cipollaro) ditch, on the right hand side of the road, are the remains of a tomb, of which only the concrete core has been preserved: this is a "multi-level" tomb, typically featuring a square base surmounted by a pyramid-shaped structure containing the burial chamber, accessible from the opposite side of the road. There are numerous examples of this type of funerary architecture along the Appian Way, all of which, however, are in a bad state of preservation, or in any case deprived of their original cladding.

This type of tomb typically featured a square base surmounted by one or more structures with different shapes, as in the case of the multi-level tomb located at the beginning of the 5th milestone, near the so-called tomb of Seneca, where the upper structure consists of an octagonal prism topped by a cylinder, for a total height of 13 metres.



Address

Via Appia Antica - Roma (RM)

How to get

From ROMA TERMINI railway station take the train direction VELLETRI to SANTA MARIA DELLE MOLE stop and then walk for about 5 minutes towards the Via Appia Antica.

Poi 6



A Address

Via Appia Antica - Roma (RM)

How to get

From ROMA TERMINI railway station take the train direction VELLETRI to SANTA MARIA DELLE MOLE stop and then walk for about 12 minutes towards the Via Appia Antica.

Mound tomb near the Fosso di Fiorano

Roma / Place to visit - Tombs

At the end of the 9th mile of the Appian Way, at a short distance from a stream called Fosso di Fiorano (or Fosso del Cipollaro), at the side of the ancient road, a stretch of which here features its original basalt paving stones (Luigi Canina had calculated that the road was slightly over 4 metres wide), you may see the concrete core of a mound-type tomb rising over a sturdy base made of blocks of peperino stone. In the 19th century, the architect Luigi Canina, during the works for "restoring" the Via Appia Antica, found an inscription nearby the tomb, on travertine stone, dating to the Republican period, which, he surmised belonged to the tomb of a consul, which no longer exists.

The stream, located just to the south of the tomb, marks the border between the communes of Ciampino and Marino, and is called "Fosso del Cipollaro" because of the extensive onion crops grown in the surrounding fields until the 1980s (onion, in Italian, is called "cipolla"). The stream, which, unfortunately, is overgrown and no longer maintained, eventually flows into the Tiber, to the south-west of Rome, in the neighbourhood of Tre Fontane.

Poi 7



A Address

Via Appia Antica - Roma (RM)

How to get

From ROMA TERMINI railway station take a train direction VELLETRI to SANTA MARIA DELLE MOLE stop and then walk for about 1.5 km towards the Via Appia Antica.

The Greek Cross Tomb

Roma / Place to visit - Tombs

This tomb, of which the concrete core has survived with some of its brick cladding, has a square ground plan; the entrance to the burial chamber is on the side opposite side to the road and the chamber itself features three niches, which give it the appearance of a Greek cross structure, hence the name of the tomb. During the excavations inside the cinerary urns of the deceased were recovered, one of which is made of glass, containing the remains of two individuals, while a pottery urn contains the ashes of a child. The tomb was excavated in 2005, during which it was found that, prior to its construction, the site was occupied by baths built during the reign of the emperor Hadrian and subsequently partially demolished.

Poi 8



A Address

Via Appia Antica - Ciampino (RM)

How to get

From METRO LINE B station LAURENTINA take the BUS 720 to FIORANELLO/APPIA stop and then walk for 1.3 km, alternatively from METRO LINE A station ANAGNINA exit to Via Tuscolana, take a regional COTRAL BUS direction VELLETRI to APPIA BIVIO/VIA

Via Appia Antica - Ciampino

Ciampino / Place to visit - Ancient streets

This is the junction of Via Appia Antica and Via delle Capanne di Marino, from where you may continue along the other itineraries across the Park by following the information on the board.

DEI LAGHI stop and then walk
for 3 minutes.