

From Circonvallazione Tuscolana to Tor Fiscale

Park of the Aqueducts / Park of the Tor Fiscale

This itinerary explores the Park of the Aqueducts and Tor Fiscale, featuring some of the most interesting areas of the Archaeological Park of the Appia Antica, where the green Roman countryside serves as a backdrop to some amazing archaeological finds.

The itinerary begins at the entrance to the Park of the Aqueducts, at the junction of Via Lemonia and Circonvallazione Tuscolana. The area contains no less than six of the eleven aqueducts which once supplied water to Rome. Exploring the Park you will see, alongside the remains of the *Aqua Claudia-Anio Novus* and the *Aqua Marcia-Tepula-Iulia* aqueducts, built in Roman times, the *Acqua Felice* aqueduct dating back to the end of the 16th century as well. The *Aqua Tepula* and *Iulia* were used, in the Middle Ages, to supply water to the Fosso dell'Acqua Mariana, a canal cut to irrigate the surrounding fields. Besides the impressive ruins of the aqueducts, the area is dotted with several old farmhouses as well such as the Casale di Romavecchia, built in the Middle Ages, and the remains of the so-called Vignacce Villa, one of the largest erected in the suburbs of Rome, on the ancient Via Latina.

Leaving the Park of the Aqueducts by Via Selinunte, and crossing the neighbourhood called "Quadraretto", you come to another green area called the Tor Fiscale Park, named after a 30-metre tall Medieval watchtower built to control the surrounding countryside.



POI



Distance

8

3.45 Km

Poi

- 1 Park of the Aqueducts (Via Lemonia)
- 2 Aqua Marcia, Tepula, Iulia - Aqua Felice (Via Lemonia)
- 3 Fosso dell'Acqua Mariana (Romavecchia)
- 4 Casale di Romavecchia
- 5 Fosso dell'Acqua Mariana (Aqua Claudia - Anio Novus)
- 6 The Villa of Vignacce
- 7 Church of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross
- 8 Tor Fiscale Park



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

Poi 1

Park of the Aqueducts (Via LEMONIA)

Roma / Place to visit - Natural area

The Park of the Aqueducts covers an area of about 240 hectares in the Appio Claudio district, between Via delle Capannelle and the Rome-Cassino-Naples railway line and is all that remains of the once open tract of Roman countryside that extended all the way up to the Alban Hills. It is named after the impressive remains of six of the eleven aqueducts which, in ancient times, supplied water to the city of Rome: the *Aqua Anio vetus* built between 272 and 269 BC, the *Aqua Marcia* of 144 BC, the *Aqua Tepula* built in 125 BC, the *Aqua Iulia* of 33 BC, the *Aqua Claudia* and *Anio novus* inaugurated in AD 52.

The Park is also crossed by a canal called the Marrana dell'Aqua Mariana, the construction of which was ordered by pope Callixtus II in 1122 to supply water to the Lateran Palace in Rome. The last aqueduct to be built here was the *Aqua Felice*, between 1585 and 1587, adapting the ruined structures of the Aqua Marcia. It was named after the reigning pope Sixtus V, whose birth name was Felice Peretti. The Park is also the site of the remains of the Villa delle Vignacce, a Roman villa dating to the 2nd century AD, built by Quintus Servilius Pudens, along with historical buildings such as the Casale di Romavecchia and Casale del Sellaretto farmhouses.



Info

Free admission.

Address

C.ne Tuscolana - Roma (RM)

How to get

From METRO LINE A station GIULIO AGRICOLA walk to Via LEMONIA.

Poi 2

Aqua Marcia, Tepula, Iulia - Aqua Felice (Via LEMONIA)

Roma / Place to visit - Aqueducts

The succession of arches visible from this point belongs to the *Aqua Marcia*, which, after having crossed the area of the aqueducts continues to the Tor Fiscale tower and then on to Porta Maggiore. The *Aqua Marcia* aqueduct was built in 144 BC by the pretor *Quintus Marcius Rex*. At 91 km long, it is Rome's longest aqueduct, running from the upper Aniene Valley to Porta Maggiore. In the space of just over a century a further two aqueducts were superimposed on the *Aqua Marcia*: the *Aqua Tepula* in 125 BC and the *Aqua Iulia* in 33 BC, from springs in the hills of Grottaferrata and Marino. At the end of the 16th century, the arches of the Aqua Marcia were destroyed and the piers were used to support the *Aqua Felice* aqueduct, named after Felice Peretti, who was elected pope, in 1585, as Sixtus V.



Address

Parco degli Acquadotti - Roma (RM)

How to get

From METRO LINE A station GIULIO AGRICOLA walk to Via LEMONIA.

Poi 3

Fosso dell'Acqua Mariana (Romavecchia)

Roma / Place to visit - Aqueducts

The point where you find yourself now, near the Casale di Romavecchia farmhouse, features an artificial pool fed by a waterway called the Fosso dell'Acqua Mariana, which originally ran parallel to the aqueducts, exploiting, in several stretches, the flagstones of the ancient Via Latina as its bed. The Fosso (or Marrana) dell'Acqua Mariana was commissioned, in 1122, by pope Callixtus II, to increase the supply of water to Rome, and especially the area of the Lateran Basilica, because most of the Roman aqueducts, in particular the *Aqua Claudia*, had either been damaged or abandoned.

From the headsprings at Squarciarelli (near Grottaferrata), the Marrana crossed the Park of the Aqueducts, the area of Tor Fiscale and, exploiting the natural lay of the land and following the route of the ancient aqueducts, eventually reached the Asinaria Gate, where it powered water mills and formed a pool; from here it continued to the Metronia Gate, before flowing into the Tiber near the church of S. Maria in Cosmedin.



Address

Parco degli Acquadotti - Romavecchia - Roma (RM)

How to get

From METRO LINE A station GIULIO AGRICOLA walk for 300 metres along viale Giulio Agricola. In via LEMONIA there are numerous entrances to the Park.

The canal was crossed, here and there, by characteristic bridges which, together with the surrounding Roman remains, are featured in the many landscapes of the Roman countryside painted between the 17th and 19th centuries. The name Mariana seems to come from the *Fundus Maranus*, an area known as Morena today, where the water was channelled underground, near the Villa of the Centronii, using an old conduit belonging to the *Aqua Claudia*. *Marianus* then became Mariana and, finally, Marrana, which is still used as a synonym of stream or ditch in the countryside surrounding Rome. Today, it is the most important tributary of the river Almone.

Poi 4

Casale di Romavecchia

Roma / Place to visit - Casali

Located between the 4th and 5th milestone of the ancient Via Latina, and the Aqua Claudia and Aqua Marcia, the building was originally a tower house controlling a strategically important area. The core of the building, made with lava chips, blocks of peperino stone and fragments of ancient marble, dates back to the 13th century and incorporates ancient Roman structures.

The internal courtyard contains various archaeological finds, unearthed in the area between the end of the 19th and the early 20th century, during excavation campaigns carried out by the owners of the estate, the enormously wealthy Torlonia family. When no longer necessary for defensive purposes, it was transformed into a farmhouse. The name "Roma Vecchia" – Old Rome – comes from the ruins of the nearby Villa of the Sette Bassi, which were so extensive as to be mistaken, in the 18th century, for an actual city.



📍 Address

Via Lemonia - Parco degli Acquadotti - Roma (RM)

🚶 How to get

From METRO LINE A station GIULIO AGRICOLA walk along Viale Giulio Agricola. In via Lemonia there are numerous entrances to the Park.

Poi 5

Fosso dell'Acqua Mariana (Aqua Claudia - Anio Novus)

Roma / Place to visit - Aqueducts

In 1122, pope Callixtus II ordered the construction of this waterway, known as the Fosso (or Marrana) dell'acqua Mariana, parallel to the *Aqua Claudia* aqueduct. It was built to supply water to the city, and especially to the area of the Lateran Basilica, because most of the Roman aqueducts, in particular the Aqua Claudia, had either been badly damaged or abandoned. From the headsprings at Squarciarelli (near Grottaferrata), the Marrana crossed the Park of the Aqueducts, the area of Tor Fiscale and, exploiting the natural lay of the land and following the route of the ancient aqueducts, eventually reaching the Asinaria Gate, where it powered water mills and formed a pool; from here it continued to the Metronia Gate, before flowing into the Tiber near the church of S. Maria in Cosmedin.

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📍 Address

Viale Appio Claudio - Roma (RM)

🚶 How to get

From METRO LINE A station GIULIO AGRICOLA walk for 300 metres along viale Giulio Agricola. In via Lemonia there are numerous entrances to the Park.

Poi 6

The Villa of Vignacce

Roma / Place to visit - Roman Bathb

The so-called “Villa of Vignacce”, located inside the Park of the Aqueducts, is one of the largest villas found in the suburbs of Rome. It was built on an artificial hill dominating the surrounding countryside, at the 4th mile of the Via Latina, to which it was connected with a private road. The owner of the villa, identified by means of the brick stamps and lead pipe inscriptions, was Quintus Servilius Pudens, a wealthy brick-maker, who built it between AD 125 and 130, during the reign of the emperor Hadrian, with luxurious residential quarters, gardens with monumental fountains and waterworks and private baths. Today, only the baths remain, featuring a vast round domed building surrounded by smaller rooms. Pottery jars were included in the concrete of the domed roof to reduce its weight, a construction technique that was widely used, especially in the monuments built at the time of the emperor Constantine, in the first half of the 4th century AD.

The archaeological excavations carried out on the site of the villa have revealed that it continued to be used well into the 6th century AD, albeit with alterations and for different purposes. The digs have unearthed a number of beautiful artworks, such as a statue of Aphrodite, the Chiaramonti Ganymede, the Tyche of Antiochia and a colossal portrait of Julia Domna, wife of the emperor Septimius Severus, preserved today in the Vatican Museums. During the archaeological campaign undertaken in 2009 by the Rome Superintendence, in partnership with the American Institute for Roman Culture, an extraordinary statue of the satyr Marsyas was found, who challenged Apollo to a contest of music and lost his hide and his life, skinned alive by the god. The multi-coloured statue is preserved in the Centrale Montemartini Museum in Rome.



📍 Address

Parco degli Acquadotti - Roma (RM)

🚶 How to get

From METRO LINE A station GIULIO AGRICOLA walk along Viale Giulio Agricola and enter the PARK.

Poi 7

Church of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross

Roma / Place to visit - Churches

The church of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross is a Romanian Orthodox Church commissioned, in 2001, by the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate in Italy. The interior of the church was radically altered in 2007, with the addition of the altar and the iconostasis, which, in Eastern Christianity, consists of a wall of icons and religious paintings (icons) separating the nave from the sanctuary and featuring 3 doors, the middle one, called the Holy Door, being directly in front of the altar and which can be used only by the celebrant (priest or bishop) and, at times, by the deacon. The icons include the image of the Virgin of the Incarnation and Christ Pantokrator (the all-powerful), the Eucharist, the Annunciation, the Four Evangelists, the 12 Apostles and the Prophets of the Old Testament, besides several other icons depicting the liturgical feasts celebrated in the church.



📍 Address

Via Alessandro Viviani - Roma (RM)

🚶 How to get

From METRO LINE A station LUCIO SESTIO exit to via Lucio Sestio then walk for 10 minutes.

Poi 8

Tor Fiscale Park

Roma / Place to visit - Natural area

The Tor Fiscale Park is a green area covering about 11 hectares in the Archaeological Park of the Appia Antica. This rural area is scattered with numerous historical and archaeological remains bearing witness to centuries of history. The Park features the remains of Roman villas, impressive aqueducts, old farmhouses built along the ancient Via Latina, which once led from Rome to the city of Capua. Its name comes from Monsignor Filippo Foppi, who once served as “fiscale”, as the Treasurer of the Papal States was known, and who purchased a tower here in the middle of the 17th century. The landscape is characterised by the two aqueducts that cross it. The longest stretch belongs to the Aqua Marcia, built in 144 BC, over which the conduit of the Aqua Tepula was superimposed in 125 BC, followed by the Aqua Julia in 33 BC. Between 1585 and 1587 pope Sixtus V, whose birth name was Felice Peretti, re-used the ancient arches to carry the new Aqua Felice, designed to supply water to the Viminal and Quirinal districts of Rome. The other arches, made of blocks of tufa stone and brickwork, belong to two other aqueducts that run one on top of the other, supported by the same piers, the Aqua Claudia superimposed by the Aqua Anio novus, erected in AD 38 by Caligula and inaugurated by Claudius in AD 52.



🕒 Info

Opening hours:
Everyday from sunrise to sunset.

📍 Address

Via dell'Acquedotto Felice - Roma (RM)

🚶 How to get

From METRO LINE A station PORTA FURBA walk along Via dei Levis and enter to the nearby entrance in Via Lucio Mario Perpetuo

The Park also contains several underground structures, ancient caverns used as air raid shelters during World War II and, more recently, as mushroom farms. Traces of Roman villas with bathhouses may be seen near the old farmhouses, which have been refurbished and today host refreshment and information points. In particular, near the entrance is the Casale Museum hosting cultural events, exhibitions, workshops for children, conferences and info centres. During the renovation works the remains of a Roman villa dating to the 1st-2nd century AD were discovered and may now be admired by visitors in an underground exhibition space.