

A spring walk in Rome

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some of the city's greatest greenery. Best of all, urban trekking is FREE!

Starting point: Piazza della Rovere

- Frisbee (or something for playing in the park)
- Your trekkin' shoes!

Beginning at Piazza della Rovere, near St. Peter's Basilica, head up the hill (it is a hike after all). This street is Via di Gianicolo, and it's up the Gianicolo hill that we're heading. Although one of the tallest hills in Rome, the Gianicolo is not one of the famous seven. Clearly, this was a mistake of the ancient Romans as this hill rivals all others for beauty and scenic look-outs.

As you ascend, you'll pass the Pontifical North American College on your right (behind whose walls lies the most beautiful soccer field I've seen in Rome where, apparently, the Swiss Guard take the North American priests-in-training to town).

Continue winding up the hill and enjoy your first glimpses over the entire city.



Stay to your left and instead of following the Via di Gianicolo the whole way up the hill, head up the stairs, the Rampa della Quercia. This will bring you up into the Gianicolo Park and even better scenic view points.

Follow the path and enjoy the view. Make sure to notice the huge statue of Anita Garibaldi on your right, baby in one hand, gun in the other, hair flowing, clothes billowing as she gallops on her horse out of the city. This fiery Brazilian woman was keen fighter and rider and battled alongside

her lover, Giuseppe Garibaldi, who led Italian forces against the Austrian Empire to reunify Italy (the first time since the ancient Roman Empire) in the 19th century.

There are several benches and places to sit along the way so take a "pausa" and buy a coffee or beer at one of these. Relax and enjoy the stunning views over the city. Point out the dome of the Pantheon, the Vittore Emmanuele II Monument (aka "Wedding cake"), the many domes that grace the cityscape, the ancient Roman ruins down by the Palatine and Capitoline hills, and the hills in the distance.

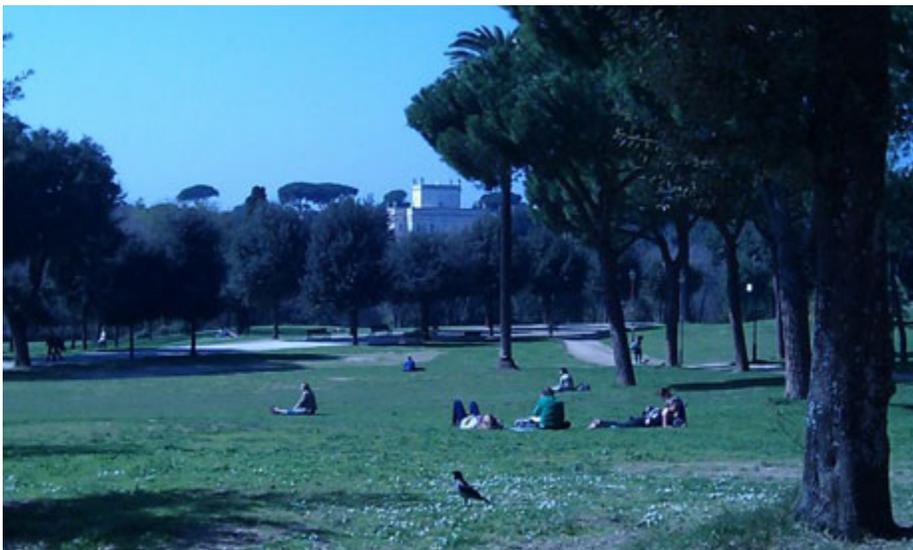


Refueled and reveling in images of Rome's expanse and beauty, continue on your way through the cypress tree lined street, the Passegiata del Gianicolo. Passing through a large gate, you'll hit Via Garibaldi. If you're up for a detour, take a left and check out the awe-inspiring Acqua Paola, fountain of Pope Paul V (who finished the construction of St. Peter's basilica in the 17th century).

If not, take a right and head up Via Garibaldi. Take a peek down Via Angelo Masina (on your left) for a view of the American Academy in Rome, where scholars-, artists-, and architects-in-residence muse, create, and study in a beautiful villa and garden.

Continue going straight past Arco Antico (one of the best restaurants in Rome) up Via di San Pancrazio. Check out the undulating architecture on your right (don't you just love Rome sometimes??) and then head into Villa Pamphili. Originally the private villa of the wealthy Pamphili family, the land is now Rome's largest park.

Go now while everything is blooming. White blossoms bedeck trees and leave blankets of pedals on the grass below, towering Umbrella Pines provide patches of shade...this park is truly never-ending.



Explore! Throw your frisbee! Bathe in the sunshine!

If you're too tired to walk back down the hill, jump on the 870 bus at the stop next to Arco Antico, which will bring you back down to Piazza della Rovere.

Happy hiking and let me know how it goes!