

Great Day Trips from Rome

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Italy gave us the Renaissance and it gave us risotto. It gave us the piano and it gave us Prada. Its capital, Rome, was the empire that encompassed it all – which is why so many travelers are more than happy to spend all of their Italian holiday in the Eternal City.

Yet there are treasure troves of history and culture waiting to be discovered when you venture into the surrounding regions of Lazio and Umbria. From hikes in hilltop towns to losing yourself in golden cities, you're spoilt for choice for things to do with your vacation in Rome. Here are some of our favorites.

Rome to Ostia Antica

Heading to Ostia Antica from Rome is the easiest half-day trip for travelers who don't have time for Pompeii. Once Rome's ancient seaport, the thriving commercial center fell following the decline of the Roman Empire – and today it's one of the best-preserved ancient Roman cities. The ruins of docks, mansions, arenas, shopping malls and baths offer a glimpse into the life of the people who once used them.

Getting there: It takes less than one hour to reach Ostia Antica from Rome. The quickest route is by taking the SP8 out of Rome, although if it's busy, taking the A91 or the Cristoforo Colombo south-west out of the city will get you there in around the same time.



Source: Shutterstock

Rome to Tivoli

With a history stretching even further back than Rome's, Tivoli is as significant as it is beautiful. Stand in the middle of the mammoth Sanctuary of Hercules Victor, explore the thermal baths, marvel at Hadrian's Villa and fall in love with the most beautiful Italian Renaissance garden in Europe – the UNESCO-protected Villa D'Este. The natural wonders surrounding Tivoli provide opportunities to go trekking, horse riding, rafting and even paragliding.



Source: Shutterstock

Getting there: Head east on the A24, which becomes the E80, then turn off on the SP51 and follow the SR5 all the way to Rome to Tivoli.

Rome to Castelli Romani

When in Rome, do as the Romans do, as the saying goes. Most of the city's inhabitants will flock to Castelli Romani for weekend getaways – a darling refuge from the often hectic capital. Landscapes glow with lush green hills and bright blue lakes, while the 13 towns that make up this slice of heaven provide plenty of things to do outside of Rome. Feast on porchetta (herb-heavy, spit-roasted pork) in the wine town of Frascati, visit the Pope's summer residence at Castel Apostolico and relax by the sparkling volcanic lake, Lago Albano.

Getting there: The best way to get to Frascati by car is by taking the A24 east out of the city, then heading south on the E80. Then the Via Tuscolana will take you all the way to Frascati. The journey takes around 45 minutes.

Rome to Orvieto

Delve into sweet Umbrian paradise at this picturesque hill town just outside of Rome. A settlement in the Etruscan era, Orvieto became a fortified town where Popes would flee to escape sieges in the capital. While the 14th-century Orvieto Cathedral's colorful mosaic facade takes much of the limelight, the rest of this vibrant city is just as stunning. It's perfect for strolling, with paths that wind you round markets, street artists, antique sellers, and restaurants. Don't leave without sampling some Umbrian specialties from the oh-so-cozy [Trattoria del Moro-Aronne](#).



Source: Shutterstock

Getting there: This two-hour drive takes you north out of Rome on the SS4. From there head onto the E45, then follow the E35 into Orvieto.

Rome to Naples

The grande dame of the Amalfi coast begs to be explored, and you can do it all in one day trip to Naples from Rome. This lively city sits close to the hot belly of Vesuvius – and some say it's this volcanic drama that makes Neapolitans live for the moment. Swig a shot of espresso and prepare for a spectacle of pure street theatre that goes some way to explaining why Naples is the setting for so many books and movies. You'd be nuts not to grab a slice of the action in Pizzeria Brandi while you're there – the restaurant is the birthplace of Margherita pizza.

Getting there: Set around two and a half hours to drive from Rome to Naples, with the fastest route being by driving east out of Rome on the A24, then staying on the E80 until the E45 turn-off, which will take you all the way to Naples.

Rome to Pompeii

A day trip from Rome to Pompeii is a must-do, so you can see the once-thriving Roman city that was devastated by the catastrophic eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79AD, forever preserving its ancient citizens in history. You don't need buckets of imagination to let your mind wander back nearly 2,000 years – frescoes still adorn the walls of villas, cobbled streets remain intact, even the erotic art and phallic signposts of brothels are on view to see. To truly make sense of the ruins, it helps to book one of the many Pompeii tours.

Getting there: Driving from Rome to Pompeii will take you just over two and a half hours. Head to Naples on the E45, then find the A3 road which will lead you to Pompeii.

Rome to Florence

Gazing upon Michelangelo's David is a bucket-list experience that sends tourists flocking to Florence. It's the beating heart of Renaissance art, where even the graffiti is historic. You can taste that you're in the middle of Tuscany, and whether it's razor-thin charcuterie stuffed into cloud-like focaccia or the ripest tomato sauce you've ever tasted, food lovers will be in their element here.



Source: Shutterstock

Getting there: Head north out of Rome on the SS4, then take the E35 until you see signs for the E45, which then becomes the E35 that takes you to Florence.

What's your favorite day trip from Rome? Share your recommendations with us on [Twitter](#).

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