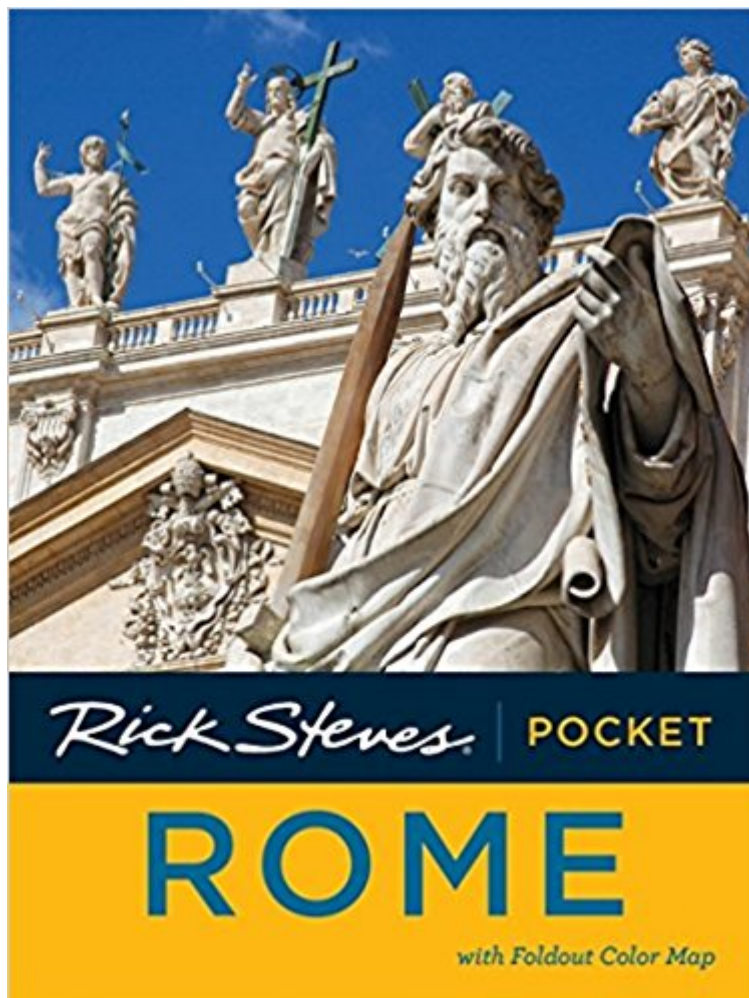




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# Rick Steves Pocket Rome



## Synopsis

Rick Steves Pocket guidebooks truly are a “tour guide in your pocket.” This colorful, compact 220-page book includes Rick’s advice for prioritizing your time, whether you’re spending 1 or 7 days in a city. Everything a busy traveler needs is easy to access: a neighborhood overview, city walks and tours, sights, handy food and accommodations charts, an appendix packed with information on trip planning and practicalities, and a fold-out city map. Included in *Â* Rick Steves Pocket Rome: Sights: the National Museum, Palatine Hill, Trajan’s Column, Market, and Imperial Forums, Baths of Diocletian, Appian Way, St. Peter-in-Chains, Pilgrim’s Tour of Rome, Jewish Ghetto, and Capitoline Museums Walks and Tours: Colosseum Tour, Roman Forum Tour, Night Walk Across Rome, Pantheon Tour, Vatican Museum Tour, St. Peter’s Basilica Tour, and Borghese Gallery

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Since 1973, Rick has spent about four months a year exploring Europe. His mission: to empower Americans to have European trips that are fun, affordable, and culturally broadening. Rick produces a best-selling guidebook series, a public television series, and a public radio show, and organizes small-group tours that take over 20,000 travelers to Europe annually. He does all of this with the help of a hardworking, well-traveled staff of 100 at Rick Steves’ Europe in Edmonds, Washington, near Seattle. When not on the road, Rick is active in his church and with advocacy groups focused on economic justice, drug policy reform, and ending hunger. To recharge, Rick plays piano, relaxes

at his family cabin in the Cascade Mountains, and spends time with his partner Trish, son Andy, and daughter Jackie. Connect with Rick: facebook: Rick Steves twitter: @RickSteves instagram: ricksteves europe

I recently travelled to Rome and like a good traveller, I wanted to have all my ducks in a row. I made a list of everything I needed to bring and while reviewing this list, I noticed I did not have a travel guide. I promptly got on and looked up guides for Rome. This book was highly praised and pocket sized. SCORE!! I bought the book and waited eagerly for its arrival. Once it arrived, I thumbed through it but didn't really look at it since I knew the plane ride would be long and I'd have plenty of time. When I finally opened and read the guide, I was surprised with the vast amounts of information that was in it. There is a map that shows you all of the must see spots in Rome and how to get there. There are more than 10 pages assigned to each section of the city like Vatican City, the Coliseum, the Roman Forum, and the art galleries. Each section tells you not only the history of the area but also the best places to eat and the things to avoid. There is a section with commonly used Italian phrases so you're not on your own in the city. Although, most people speak English, it is good to have some knowledge of the language for those who play dumb with tourists. I kept this book with me every where I went so I would know the best places to eat and the places to avoid. If you're looking to go to Rome, or any other city in Italy, Rick Steves' can sure help you out with these nifty books. It's a great guide to have in a city that can swallow you whole. \*\*\*\*\*PLEASE NOTE- If you're planning on going to Rome in September, it is extremely hot and muggy. There are water fountains where you can refill your bottle but they are few and far between. The prices of a beverage are ridiculous so bring your own bottle. Vatican City and the Sistine Chapel are super packed no matter what time you go. Make sure you make a reservation to tour with a group so you do not have to wait in line for hours. The only thing I noticed in the book that is slightly different is picking up tickets for the Coliseum tour. If you buy these tickets online in combination with the Roman Forum and Palestine Hill, you MUST pick these tickets up at the entrance to the forum. There is a box office over there and you have to have your print out. The people at Coliseum cannot and will not take a paper print out and there is no box office there. All of the tickets, even the Coliseum ones, have to be purchased at the box office at the Forum. Most of the people who do the tours are just that, tour guides, they do not know much about picking up tickets so if you ask them, they will either give you the run around or direct to you a completely different place altogether. Also, if you're visiting any of the Art Museums, they are HOT!! Extremely, suffocatingly hot. I am not sure if that was just because it was so hot outside or if they keep it hot to preserve the art work but if you cannot stand the heat,

you might want to avoid these museums. They also tell you to arrive 30 minutes early to check in but they only let you in about 5 minutes before your scheduled time and only allow you about an hour to tour the entire museum. The Borgehesse Museum has a coat check and although they say it's mandatory, not many people check in their coats or bags so there is a lot of unauthorized photo taking by people who either don't speak the language or don't care that they are ignoring the rules.

Rick Steves is one of the most popular series of guides to travel. We were in Rome for 4 days this summer, and used the book as a quick reference guide. The organization of the book is much like the other guides. It is about 4.5 by 6 inches, 230 pages or so. The first pages of introduction gives a synopsis of the major tourist areas: Vatican City, North Rome, Pantheon, Trastevere, Ancient Rome, Pilgrim's Rome, South Rome, and Termini. The Daily Reminder gives a succinct overview of special hours for attractions on different days of the week. On Sundays, for instance, the Vatican Museums are closed. Many sights are closed on Mondays, including the Capitolini Museum, the Borghese Gallery, Ostia Antica, etc. The guide also lists major sights with its rating of importance: those with three triangles, like the Colosseum, the Forum, the Vatican, and the Borghese Galleries, are rated three triangles for "Don't Miss." The back of the book includes a detailed map of Rome with Metro stops. Romans rely less on the underground than on above-ground trams and buses. One of the huge short-comings of the guidebook is the lack of a bus map and schedule. The buses generally come every 15-25 minutes. It can be annoyingly hot in August to be waiting in full sun for the buses. The Roman bus stops have a detailed listing of the stops for each line, but it is impossible to figure out which buses to take unless you ask someone. Fortunately the Romans are such generous and friendly people that they generally help poor tourists out. The map of Rome is not very useful for walking. The smaller streets are not shown. The Trastevere area is not shown in entirety. There are free maps distributed in hotel lobbies that are superior to the one in the book. The remainder of the book contains several walking tours of major sites: Colosseum, Forum, Pantheon, Night Walk across Rome, Vatican Museum, St. Peter's Basilica, the Borghese Gallery. In general, the tours hit the highlights of each sight, but few details are given. We traveled with children and were prepared for Museum Fatigue ("You promised, TWO churches only today," said my son). Therefore, for the best sights, we actually had private tour guides through a tour company. It was invaluable to our enjoyment. Note: this is a brief and populist guide. It is good for an overview, but not for any kind of detailed historical or academic treatise of the major sights. For this kind of information, I recommend doing research before your trip on the internet, as each major sight has a website. As well, the Blue Guides will bring more life to the tours. The tour companies are

expensive, but allowed us to bypass long, hot lines for the major attractions. Our tour guide was an archeologist who happened to be a great speaker. The children were vastly entertained, and she was familiar with all the SHADY spots on the tour. We did not use this book for restaurant recommendations or hotels. We used a Tripadvisor city app: take the recommendations with a grain of salt, as they are not always unbiased. So, why a guide book and not a smartphone app? Smartphone apps (maps, Tripadvisor, etc.) have an advantage in that your GPS location is available, and the distance to various sights can be accurately estimated. However, smartphones are difficult to see in the sun, and the information you want is not always easily searchable. It would be cool, for example, to wear Google Glass and have it link to Wikipedia. Great, but it's way cheaper to buy a \$10 book.

Buying the kindle version of this book is a waste of money and time. This is the type of book that needs to be printed in order to optimize its usefulness. There are maps, restaurant reviews, museum tips, etc. all that need to be printed and carried in your day bag. The kindle version does not allow you to print any of the content. You can print some of the pages by jumping through a few hoops and taking some screen shots, but it really is a time consuming process that can be avoided if you just buy the real physical book. The content of the book is great. My favorite sections are the restaurant suggestions of good places to eat that are close to the major attractions. I also love the section on basic phrases and the guided tours. Great, great book. I see why Rick is #1.

This is best suited for people who are not staying for long AND short on time for planning. It's extremely well organized, and very succinctly highlights the key sights in the city, and the tips on tickets/transportation/even bathrooms, etc. It also provides more details on the more famous sights and artworks. So just by following this book without any prior planning, you can easily hit all of the key sights without thinking, and get something out of it. This is also super lightweight and convenient to bring when traveling. That said, if you have more time for planning, I would suggest supplement this with online reviewing sites and maybe other travel books for more places to visit. And if you have a deeper interest in the history you'd also need to read other books or online resources.

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