

# NEW LOOK AT KNOWN DESTINATION: IN SEARCH OF MODERN ROME



Think of Rome, and the next word you think of probably wouldn't be 'modern.' Majestic, perhaps; historic - definitely, but not exactly contemporary or avant-garde. Most tourists flock to Rome to gaze in wonder at the stone relics of the Roman Empire - the Colosseum, the Pantheon and the Forum among them. But if your affinity lies more with the more up-to-date, then believe it or not, this ancient city has something to offer if you look hard enough.

## **MAXXI (National Museum of the 21st Century Arts)**

This exciting contemporary space, dedicated to modern art and creativity, is about as modern a place as you can find in Rome. The sweeping, innovative building itself was designed by Zaha Hadid, one of the most celebrated modern architects. You can find the gallery in Rome's Flaminio district, where it opened its doors to the public in 2010. Ever since then, the gallery has hosted groundbreaking works by a host of contemporary artists, both Italian and international. Even if you're not an art expert, the impressive building and colourful collections make an entertaining afternoon's trip away from the heavy stone constructs of Old Rome.

## **Church of Santa Maria Madre del Redentore**

Rome, like all Italian cities, has no shortage of churches. You'll hardly walk three streets without coming across a bell tower, a Gothic archway, some Romanesque pillars, or a doorway decorated with angels. But this church in the district of Tor Bella Monarca is different. For one thing, it wasn't built 800 years ago; it was built in the '80s. That means that the same robust bravado that made '80s fashion so distinctive makes itself felt in the design of this church: from the tall, arching spires, to the sweeping interior with its long skylight and bumper-size crucifix above the altar. Approach it from the right angle, and you'll realise that the building is reminiscent of a modern Noah's Arc.

## **Parco della Musica**

Seen from the air, this colossal concert complex looks something like three grey-backed beetles consulting with one another across a modern interpretation of a Greco-Roman amphitheatre. Combined, these four spaces play host to over 1 million spectators every year, who come to hear music from a range of different artists and musical groups. If you get the chance, buy a ticket and treat yourself to a show. But don't hope to escape Ancient Rome completely! When the Parco della Musica was being constructed, builders found the remains of a Roman villa from the 6th century BC, so if the modernity gets too much, you can visit the on-site museum and get a glimpse of this antique pad

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