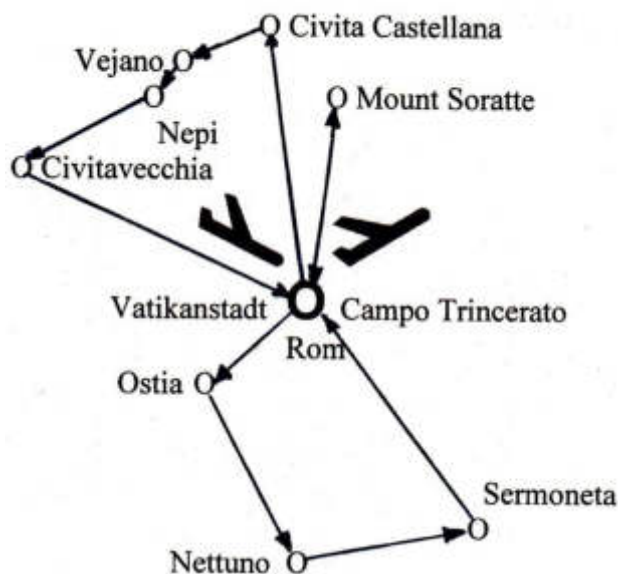
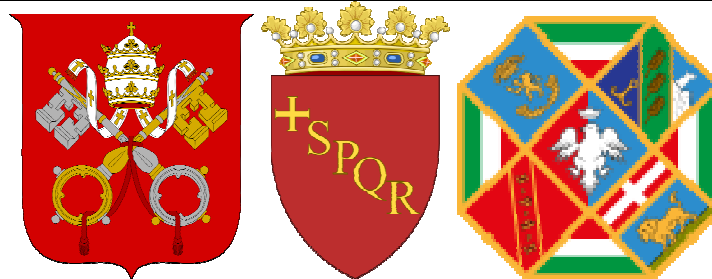


# Fortress study tour to Rome / Italy

Fortificatory study tour to Rome and surroundings

23rd September – 1st October, 2023

Preliminary PROGRAMME (Flight times are subject to change!)



## The programme in short

- Aurelian Wall
- Vatican City
- Renaissance Fortresses
- Campo Trincerato 19th ct. with revitalization models
- Bunker City Rome
- Bunker system Soratte
- Museums and memorials
- Exchange of information and experience
- Sightseeing
- Kulinaria

Rome is not only worth a trip, but also always a rewarding field of research for those interested in fortresses. The capital of Italy has been heavily fortified since Roman times, but this has not prevented enemy troops from attacking and capturing the city from time to time throughout history. Many structural fortifications have come down to the present day, some in different states. These range from the Roman city ramparts, such as the Aurelian Wall as one of the most impressive legacy of the Roman Empire, to the modern bastion fortifications by the Italian architect family Sangallo, to the major fortifications of Campo Trincerato from the 19th century, which can still be seen today in present the form of a fort belt around the city. Outside of Rome, a number of fortified aristocratic residences, city complexes and harbor fortifications were built during the Renaissance, the purpose of which was more or less to prevent, but also to protect, access to the capital.

**1. Day Saturday** Individual arrival during the day, e.g. from Munich by plane LH1868 to Rome. Arrival at Fiumicino International Airport (FCO) at 4:20 p.m., opportunity to purchase an Atac public transport 48-hour ticket; Hotel transfer (only after registration); Check-in at the Hotel IBIS Styles Aurelia\*\*\*\*, Via Andrea Ferrara, 33, 00165 Roma (stay for the duration of the tour); Dinner at the hotel, overnight stay



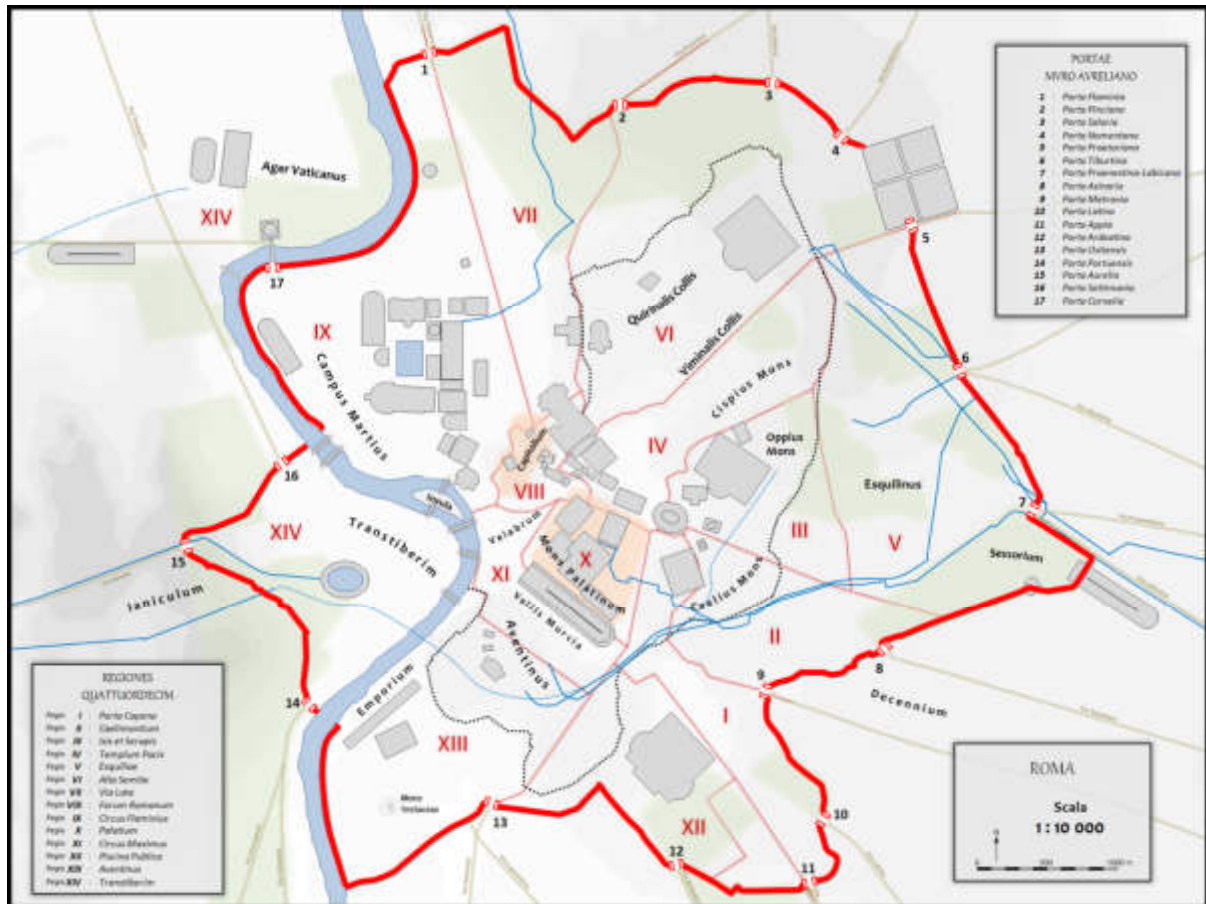
**Hotel IBIS\*\*\*\***  
Via Andrea Ferrara 33  
00165 Rom  
Italien  
+39 06-9958-8510  
HB5E1@accor.com  
<https://all.accor.com/hotel/B5E1/index.de.shtml>



**2. Day Sunday** Visit of the Aurelian Walls in the section between Porta San Paola and Porta Metronia with Sangallo bastions. Visit to the Porta San Sebastiano Museum (3-hour guided tour between Porta Ardeatina and Porta Latina); then free time, e.g. visit to the Colosseum (bus line 081); How to get to Porta San Paola by subway: Metro A Station Cornelia - Station Termini; change trains → Metro B station dates - Piramide station

## The Aurelian Wall

In the 3rd century AD, Germanic peoples steadily advanced southward, eventually invading northern Italy. Nor could they be stopped or repelled by the Roman emperors. Emperor Lucius Domitius Aurelianus (214-275 AD), after a defeat at Placentia, triumphed over the Alemanni at Pavia in 271 AD, but he nonetheless began to build a wall between 270 and 272 AD that entire urban area that had grown far beyond the Servian Wall. After his assassination in 275 AD, Emperor Marcus Aurelius Probus (19.08.232-282) continued the work and finished it in 282 AD. The city wall, known as muri Aureliani, was 18.837 km long. It had about 380 towers that protruded from the wall and were built at a distance of 29.60 m (100 Roman feet) from each other. Behind the slits in the wall ran a partially vaulted walkway. Gates were built on the major arterial roads to connect town and country. To these came the so-called postemlae, smaller wall gates.



Total perimeter of the Aurelian Walls.

The excursion section includes the bulging arch in the southeast, starting in Regio XIII -Aventinus- / Gate 13 (Porta Ostiensis / Porta San Paolo) to Gate 9 (Porta Metronia) in Regio XII -Piscina Publica-.

The Aurelian Wall experienced its first modernization under Maxentius (278-28.10.312 AD). A second and far-reaching renewal was carried out by Stilicho (~359-408), the powerful army commander of Honorius (09.09.384-15.08.423), in 402 AD in the name of his emperor. He had the wall and its towers increased and, where necessary, gates converted or expanded. Although the Muri Aureliani were restored and changed in some ways after the attacks of the Ostrogoths Witichis († probably 542) and Totila († after June 30, 552), today's appearance is still similar to that of the Honorius period.

Of the gates, a typical one of its kind is the Porta Latina. While the flanking, semi-circular towers date from the time of Aurelian, the single-gate arch with the windows arranged above it was built under Honorius. However, the passage of the Porta Latina in Aurelian times was already a single gate.

The situation is different with the Porta Ostiensis, now called Porta S. Paolo. This had been built with two gates, but under Honorius they were converted into a single gate for reasons of defence. The inside is still reminiscent of the former shape. Here an inner courtyard was built in front of the porta, and this had two gates, which still exist. The same is true of the Porta Appia, now called Porta S. Sebastiano. It also had two arches replaced by a single one, and it also had an inner courtyard, but only later, when the nearby Arch of Drusus was included in the gate building. However, this has nothing to do with the famous Drusus (01/14/38-09/14/09 BC) and that has only been called since the 16th century. Its destiny was to lead the aqua Antoniniana over the Via Appia, the aqueduct that led the water to the Baths of Caracalla. (after: Stützer, Herbert Alexander: The Ancient Rome; Cologne (DuMont Art Travel Guide), 1979; p. 293/294)



Porta San Sebastiano



Wall between  
Porta San Sebastiano and Ardeatina (1974)



Porta Latina



Porta Metronia

Porta Ostiensis / Porta San Paolo with Pyramid of Cestius (before restoration 2012)





Sangallo-Bastion as part of the Aurelian Wall

The bastion complex is located along Viale di Porta Ardeatini and reaches a length of more than 200 meters. It was built by Antonio Sangallo the Younger (04/12/1484-08/03/1546) in the first half of the 16th century. This was one of the many bastions that should have been added to the walls of Rome, a lavish project by Pope Paul III. (02/29/1468-11/10/1549), just a few years after Rome was sacked in 1527 by the mercenary troops of Charles V (02/24/1500 - 09/21/1558). For the construction of this bastion, Sangallo had to remove the ruins of the older structure: in fact, this is the only part of Aurelian's masonry that was ever completely rebuilt.



The complex of the Sangallo Bastion in the Google Earth aerial photo. Clearly recognizable connection and transition to the Aurelian Wall on both sides.

## THE SANGALLO - FAMILY

(Sources: Wikipedia)

### Antonio da Sangallo the Elder

Antonio da Sangallo the Elder (actually Antonio Giamberti, \* around 1455 in Florence, Italy; † December 27, 1534 *ibid*) was an Italian architect and fortress builder. He was the brother of Giuliano da Sangallo, with whom he often worked, and the uncle of Antonio da Sangallo the Younger. His responsible involvement can be seen in the following fortifications: renovation of the fortress of Sarzana (1482); Castel Sant'Angelo Rome according to a plan by Giovanni Battista Nolli (1492); Civita Castellana (1499-1503); Fortress of Nepi (1499-1503); Fort Sangallo Nettuno (1501); Castrocaro Fortress (from 1504); Medici Fortress of Arezzo (from 1506); Old Fortress of Livorno (from 1519).

### Giuliano da Sangallo

Giuliano da Sangallo (actually Giuliano Giamberti; \* around 1445 in Florence, Italy; † 1516 *ibid*) was an Italian architect and sculptor. Giuliano da Sangallo was the brother of Antonio da Sangallo the Elder. In Florence he built the monastery courtyard of Santa Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi, 1490-1494 the Palazzo Gondi, 1480-1485 for the Medici the Villa Medicea in Poggio a Caiano and from 1489 together with S. Cronaca the Palazzo Strozzi. Between 1484 and 1495 he created a Renaissance dome over a Greek cross in the church of Santa Maria delle Carceri in Prato. He also built the fortifications of Ostia and the courtyard of San Pietro in Vincoli. Soon after Julius II became pope, he left Rome, returned briefly, but then went to Florence. Later he built the citadel of Pisa. Under Leo X he stayed in Rome again for a short time, built the facade of Santa Maria dell'Anima in 1514 and was construction manager of St. Peter's Basilica in 1514/1515.

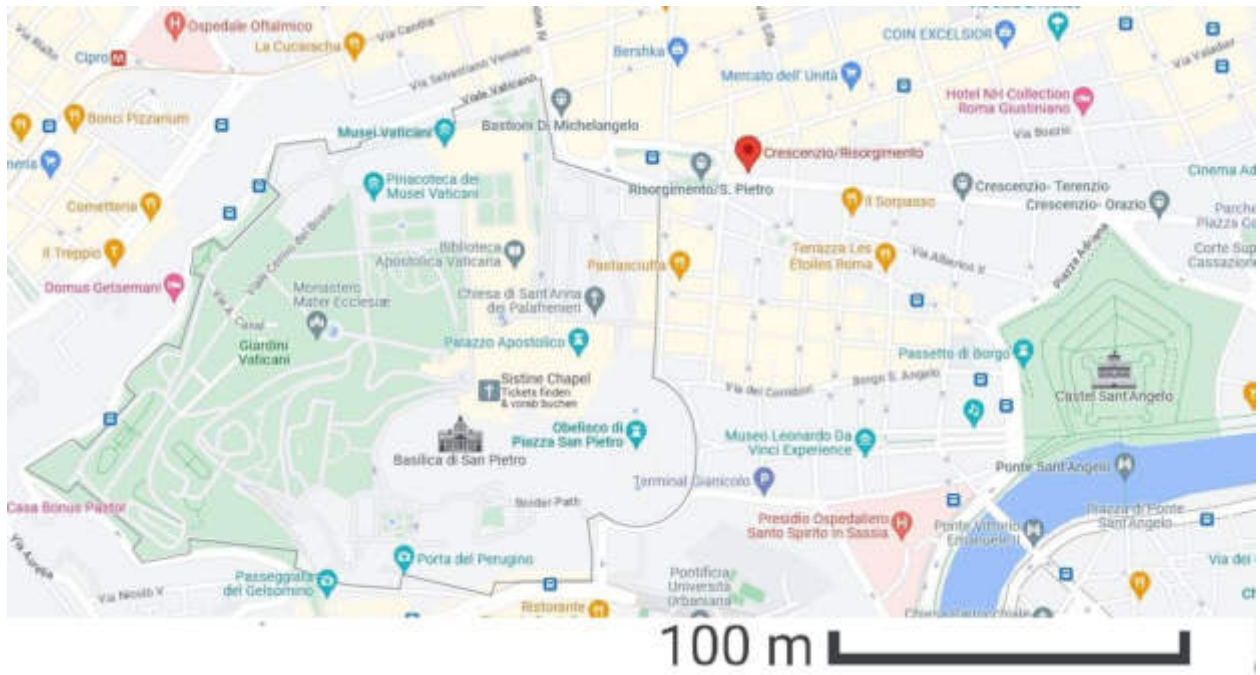
### Antonio da Sangallo the Younger

Antonio da Sangallo the Younger (actually Antonio di Bartolomeo Cordini, born April 12, 1484 in Florence; † August 3, 1546/September 29 in Terni) was an Italian architect and master builder of fortresses of the Renaissance. Sangallo came from a famous family of architects and was the nephew of Antonio da Sangallo the Elder and Giuliano da Sangallo. In 1503 he followed Giuliano da Sangallo to Rome, where he later enjoyed the favor of various popes. He initially worked for Raphael and Donato Bramante, who employed him on the execution of the pillars of the dome of St. Peter's in Rome. From 1520 he worked as an independent architect and after Raphael's death he became his successor as master builder at St. Peter's. From 1539 he worked there as chief architect. He was one of Rome's most respected and busiest architects. Fortificatory catalog raisonné: Bastion Sangallo Rome (1503?); Forte Michelangelo in Civitavecchia (1508-1535); Walls of Civitavecchia (since 1515); Loreto bastion walls (1518-1522); Modification of the Rocca di Montefiascone (1519); Fortress of Caprarola (1530-1546); Citadel of Ancona (1532); Fortezza da Basso in Florence (1534); Castle of Montalera (1534); Rocca Paolina in Perugia (1540); Fortress of Nepi from 1540; Forte Malatesta in Ascoli Piceno (1540-1543); Ramparts of Vatican City from 1543 in the Santo Spirito-Castello-Porta San Pellegrino area.

**3. Day Monday**  
25. September 2023

Visit to the bastioned fortifications in Vatican City (Mura leonine).  
Afternoon visit to Castel Sant'Angelo.  
How to get to Vatican City by underground: Metro A Cornelia Station -  
Ottaviano Station - Bus 913 Crescenzo/Risorgimento

## The Bastionary Fortifications of Vatican City



Map section of the two areas Vatican City and Castel Sant'Angelo on the Tiber

After the Saracen attack and the sack of St. Peter's Basilica in 846, Pope Leo IV began building the walls in 848, which he called Leonine. The aim was to protect the Vatican territory, which was left outside the walls and not yet urbanized by Aurelian and Honorius, from future attacks. The work was completed in just four years, and on June 27, 852, in the presence of the highest municipal and ecclesiastical hierarchies, the Pope inaugurated the new section of the city's fortifications, walking barefoot the entire circuit, stopping to bless each door and ask for divine protection. From that moment on, the city surrounded by the new fortifications was considered an independent city, the «Civitas Leonina», with its own magistrates and governors.

The fortress, which stretched for about three kilometers, included Hadrian's mausoleum (already converted into a defensive bulwark in the sixth century and called Castel Sant'Angelo), climbed the top of Vatican Hill to descend again on the southern slope and reach the river. Originally built entirely of brick, the wall was about four meters thick at the base by a height of about twenty feet and featured a patrol path at the top, topped by crenellations. Various gates opened along the stretch of wall, which were equipped with rectangular towers and covered at regular intervals. Over time, for safety reasons, the Leonese walls were remodeled and reinforced with the construction of new towers in the most exposed places, damaged sections restored and the bulwark of Castel Sant'Angelo strengthened.

Sangallo's project, which envisaged a significant expansion of the defenses between St. Peter's Basilica and the Vatican, was only begun twenty years after his death by Pope Pius IV, together

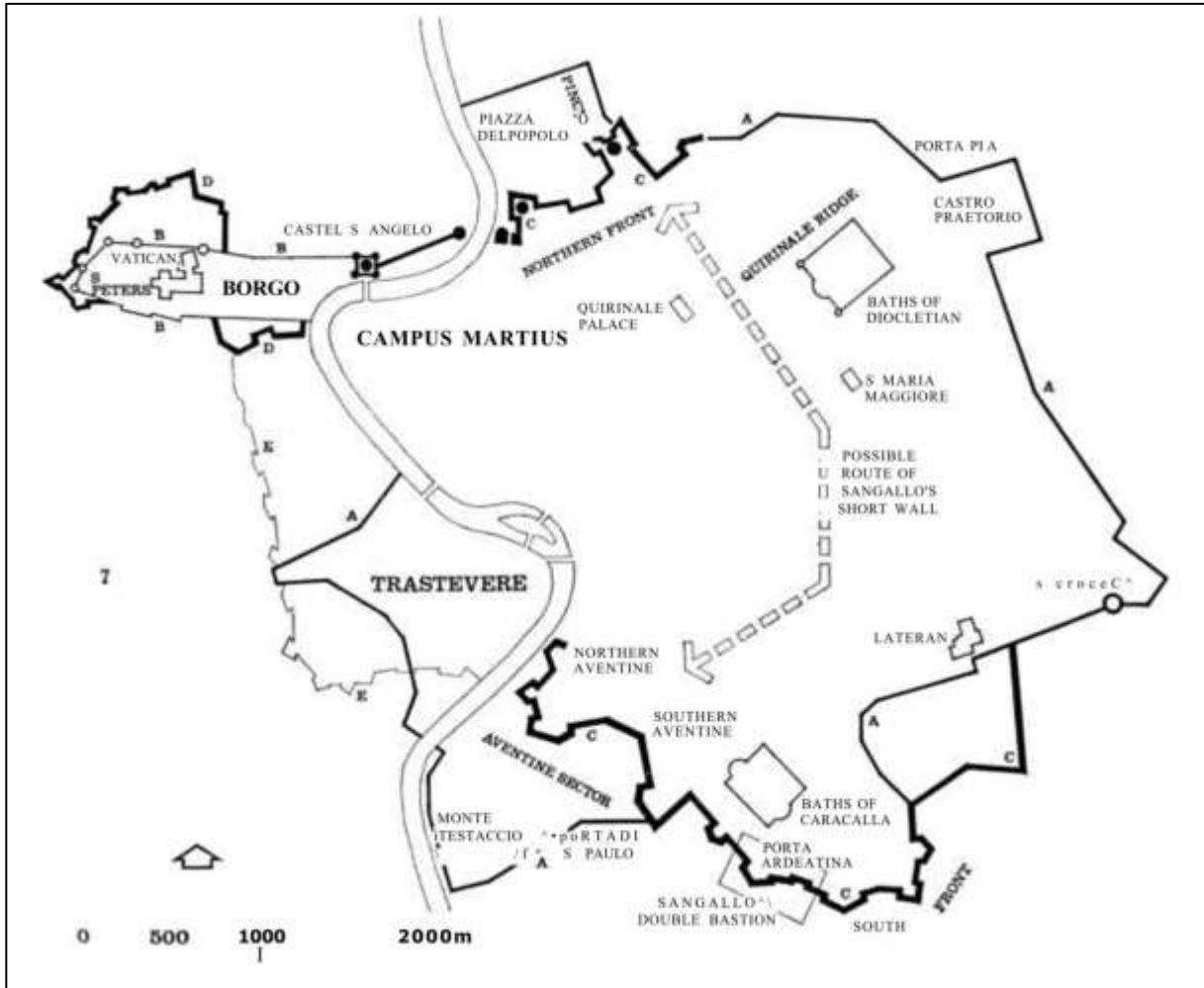
- 848 / 852** Between 848 and 852 when the Vatican was still outside the city, Pope Leo IV (790-855) had built the first wall to protect against Saracens (Leonine Wall).  
Pope Nicholas III. (around 1215-22.08.1280) build an approx. 800 meter long escape route within a massive wall between the Vatican and Castel Sant'Angelo (called Passetto di Borgo).
- In 1277**
- 1410 / 1415** Between 1410 and 1415, under the anti-pope John XXIII. (1370-22.12.1419) the old passetto was almost completely demolished and rebuilt in its present form.  
under Pope Nicholas V (November 15, 1397-March 24, 1455), four towers (three round corner towers and a shell tower) were built to reinforce the old Leonine Wall, of which the north-east tower is the most powerful.
- In 1453**
- ~ 1500** the Passetto was restored under Pope Alexander VI. (01.01.1431-18.08.1503).  
because of the new Turkish threat, under Pope Paul III. (February 29, 1468-November 10, 1549) the construction of a broader ring of defense begins under the responsibility of the architects Michelangelo and Antonio da Sangallo the Elder. J.. The north-east bastion (built by Michelangelo) and the south-east bastion (built by Antonio da Sangallo the Younger) date from this period.
- On April 18, 1543** Pope Pius IV (March 8, 1499-December 9, 1565) had built a wall similar to the Passetto (no longer preserved) from the north-east bastion of Vatican City to the north bastion of Castel Sant'Angelo, because the Borgo district had grown beyond the borders of the Passetto. Most of the walls are built under Pope Pius IV. Since Sangallo died in 1546, Michelangelo directed the work alone until his death in 1564.
- On May 8, 1561**
- Before 1563** the Porta Angelica was built.
- In 1564** the West Bastion (most western point of Vatican City) was built.
- 17th century** New Fortifications under Pope Urban VIII (04/05/1568-07/29/1644).
- 1566 / 1572** Between 1566 and 1572, work on the outer defenses of Vatican City was only fully completed under Pope Pius V (January 17, 1504 - May 1, 1572).  
under Pope Leo XIII. (March 2nd, 1810-July 20th, 1903) the ditch along the curtain walls was filled for traffic reasons and the Porta Angelica removed, since the Prati district, which adjoins the Vatican to the north, has developed strongly.
- In 1888**
- Beginning of 20th c.** At the beginning of the 20th century extensive restoration work was carried out on the walls.  
under Pope Pius X (06/02/1835-08/20/1914), the walls for the Piazza del Sant'Uffizio were breached. The Porta Cavalleggeri is demolished and rebuilt in a transposed manner.
- In 1904**
- In 1932** the Vatican Museums received under Pope Pius XI. (May 31, 1857-February 10, 1939) a separate entrance. The portal is made of travertine and is crowned by the sculptures of Michelangelo and Raphael.
- In 2000** under Pope John Paul II (May 18, 1920-April 2, 2005), the new (today's) entrance to the Vatican Museums was created in the north-east bastion.

Timeline (i.a.: [https://www.burgenwelt.org/vatikan/vatikan\\_sm/object.php](https://www.burgenwelt.org/vatikan/vatikan_sm/object.php))

with an urban planning structure of the settlement, and by his successor Pius V. (1566-1572) completed. In 1586, under Pope Sixtus IV, the city that grew up between Vatican Hill and Castel Sant'Angelo became part of the city of Rome as the XIV Borgo district.

After the unification of Italy (1870), large parts of the walls of Leonine and Borgo, as well as some gates, were demolished. Porta San Pellegrino, Porta Pertusa, Porta Cavalleggeri, Porta Santo Spirito are still visible, although their appearance has changed.





Roman fortifications. Legend: A, Aurelian Walls (3rd century), B, Leonine Walls (9th century), C, Sangallo's suggested itinerary (1534-42), the thick solid line shows the route indicated in the Uffizi drawings, D, Borgo built by Paul III after 1542, probably part of the 1534-35 design, E, Fortifications by Urban VIII (1623-44).

Source: Pepper, Simon: Planning versus fortification: Sangallo's project for the defence of Rome; in: FORT, The international journal of fortification and military architecture; ed. by the Fortress Study Group; Liverpool, No. 2, 1976 (reissued 1993); page 38

Porta Petrusa with St. John's Tower



## Gates in the rampart of Vatican City

Gate	Other names	History
<a href="#">Porta Santo Spirito</a>	<i>Posterula Saxo-num</i>	It was one of the three original gates opened in the first wall in the middle of the 9th century, together with the gates of Sant'Angelo and San Pellegrino. It is currently presented in its typical incompleteness, which neither Sangallo, due to his death, nor Michelangelo, completed.
<a href="#">Porta Cavalleggeri</a>	<i>Porta Turrionis</i>	It was probably opened between the return of the papacy from Avignon (1378) and the pontificate of Nicholas V (1447-1455). In 1904 it was walled up.
<a href="#">Porta Fabrica</a>	<i>Porta Fabrica, Porta Fornacum</i>	It was perhaps around 1415 by the Antipope John XXIII. built together with the nearby Porta Pertusa. It then took its name from the Fabbrica di San Pietro, the body responsible for the construction and maintenance of St. Peter's Basilica. Currently bricked up.
<a href="#">Porta Pertusa</a>	-	It was probably built around 1415 under the anti-pope John XXIII. built together with the nearby Porta Fabrica. Closed and reopened several times.
<a href="#">Porta Angelica</a>	-	They are twins of the nearby Porta Castello and were both built by Pius IV in 1563 and demolished along with the section of wall between them in 1888.
<a href="#">Porta San Pellegrino</a>	<i>Porta Aurea, Porta Cassia, Porta Sancti Petri, Porta Viridaria</i>	The Porta was one of the three original gates that opened in the first wall in the mid-ninth century, along with the Santo Spirito and Sant'Angelo gates. It lost most of its military function around 1450, after the wall enlargements requested by Nicholas V, and then by Pius IV, who had it walled up in 1563. It was reopened in 1823 by Pope Leo XII. as access to the barracks of the Swiss Guards, a function it has retained to this day.
<a href="#">Porta Castello</a>	-	They are twins of the nearby Porta Angelica and were both built by Pius IV in 1563 and demolished along with the section of wall between them in 1888.
<a href="#">Porta Sant'Angelo</a>	-	It was one of the three original gates opened in the first wall in the middle of the 9th century, together with the gates of Santo Spirito and San Pellegrino. It disappeared early, so much so that its location is also uncertain: certainly near the western ramparts of Castel Sant'Angelo, from which it took its name.



Ramparts of Vatican City



Floor plan of Vatican City. Remains of the Leonine Wall are located in the southwest of the Vatican Gardens and stretch from the Tower of St. John via the Lourdes Grotto and Vatican Radio to the Mater Ecclesiae Monastery. The depiction lacks the names of the bastions and the drawing of the portals.

↓ Northeast Bastion and Entrance to the Vatican Museums ↓



## Castel sant'Angelo

Due to its checkered history, Castel Sant'Angelo is one of the most interesting monuments in the city of Rome. It has often played a central role in different historical eras and thus its fate is directly linked to that of the city.



Google Earth aerial photo of the Castel Sant'Angelo from 1985. Four bastions surround the castle: on the Tiber side, Bastion Matteo on the left, on the right Bastion San Giovanni with a tower; above Bastion San Luca and on the left Bastion San Marco, from which the Passetto di Borgo leads to Vatican City. This is a covered passage above ground that enabled the popes to reach the Castel Sant'Angelo in case of danger. In front of the Castel Sant'Angelo there are five more pentagonal bastions, erected in 1561 by the master builder Francesco Laparelli.

Construction began in AD 125, during the lifetime of Emperor Hadrian (76 - 138), under the direction of the architect Demetrianus. The actual completion of the building did not take place until 193 under Septimus Severus. This was preceded by the construction of today's Angel Bridge as Pons Aelius Hadrianus in 133. The Castel Sant'Angelo was intended as a mausoleum for the emperor and his successors. Until 217, the Antonine family used it as a burial place.



Castel Sant'Angelo in the painting "Concours sur le Tibre à Rome" by Claude Joseph Vernet 1750 (detail).



The four bastions on the castle: San Luca and San Giovanni (above), San Marco and San Matteo (below).



When the Aurelian Walls of Stilicho were reinforced, the solidly built mausoleum was integrated into the city's fortifications as a citadel. This is how the Castel Sant'Angelo became the strongest fortress in Rome, also because of its favorable location. In the 6th century, the Gothic king Totila also recognized the importance of the castle in controlling the city. Military conversions and extensions were carried out over ten centuries. The work of the master builder Nicoló Lamberti (approx. 1370-1451) under Boniface IX formed the final point. (1350 - 10/01/1404). The strategic location of Castel Sant'Angelo at the northern end of Rome at the time guaranteed the control of access to the city from that direction.



Aerial photograph 1938

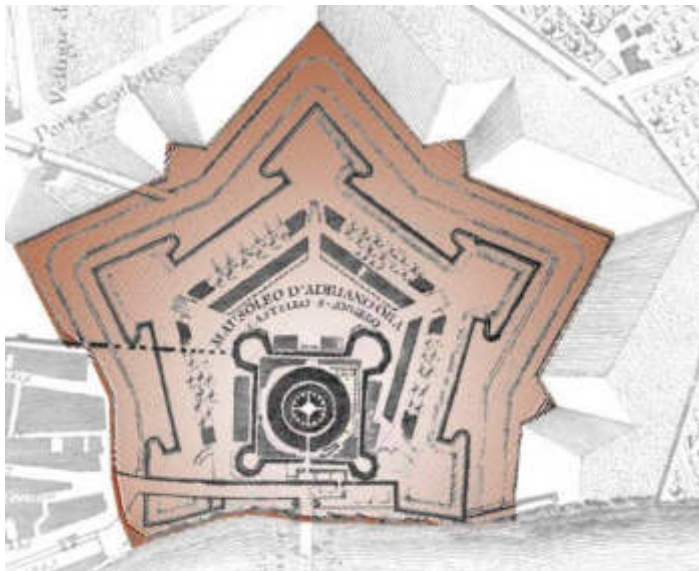


Restoration work on ditches and ramparts 1933

From 1561, the fortress builder Francesco Laparelli (April 5, 1521 - October 26, 1570) built a pentagonal wall with additional bastions around the Castel Sant'Angelo. In the 17th century, after the round watchtower was demolished, a second defensive wall was built between the two front northern bastions. At this time Pope Urban VIII (04/05/1568-07/29/1644), bourgeois Maffeo

Barberini, freed the Colosseum as a quarry and had the bronze ceiling of the portico in the Pantheon melted down. The purpose was the extension and reinforcement of the Castel Sant'Angelo and the casting of eighty 40-pounder guns (19.1 cm caliber) for this fortress. The Latin proverb is still in use today: "Quod non fecerunt barbari, fecerunt Barberini" = "What the barbarians could not manage, the Barberini managed".

In later years, Castel Sant'Angelo also served as a prison for the Inquisition. The practically equipped torture chamber still bears witness to this today. Giordano Bruno (Jan. 1548 - 02/17/1600) (who was burned on the Campi di Fiori / Blumenfeld), Galileo Galilei (02/15/1564 - 12/29/1641) and Alessandro Cagliostro (June 1743 - 08/26/1795) were famous prisoners of the Castel Sant'Angelo. In 1561 Cardinal Carlo Carafa (03/29/1517-03/04/1561) was executed here by strangulation. Towards the end of the 18th century, the popes neglected the site until the castle was confiscated by the soldiers of the French Republic in the 19th century. In 1870 the fortifications became property of the Italian state and served as a fortress and prison. Some of the halls were set up as a museum and the castle was made accessible to the public. From 1901 the building was no longer used as a castle. Castel Sant'Angelo has been a museum since February 13, 1906. In the 20th century it was restored.



Colored plan of the Castel Sant'Angelo.

### Castle of refuge and prison of the popes, sieges

984 siege by Pope Boniface VII (d. 985)

998 Siege by Emperor Otto III. (980-23./24.01.1002)

1084 Siege by Emperor Henry IV (11/11/1050-07/08/1106)

1379 Siege by the French and Anti-Pope Clement VII (1342-09/16/1394)

1527 Siege by Emperor Charles V (05/24/1500-09/21/1558)

(Sacco di Roma = sack of Rome)

1799 Siege by Neapolitans

1811 Siege by Napoleon (08/15/1769-05/05/1821)

None of these sieges resulted in the capture or destruction of Castel Sant'Angelo. From the 10th century, the Castel Sant'Angelo was owned by the popes and served as a place of refuge in case of danger. The about 800 m long passage Passetto di Borgo or Corridoio di Borgo, built 1277 under Pope Nicholas III., is an above-ground, integrated into the wall connecting passage to the Palazzo Vaticano in Vatican City. During the great sack of Rome (the "Sacco di Roma") by the troops of Emperor Charles V in 1527, it served Pope Clement VII as an escape route from the Emperor's soldiers. After that he holed himself up in the castle for a month. Likewise, Pius VII fled from Napoleon Bonaparte. (Source: Wikipedia and Lothar Schimmelpfennig)

#### 4. Day Tuesday

26. September 2023

By Bus: Renaissance Fortresses (Northern Region): Rome - Civita Castellana (Forte Sangallo) - Nepi (Rocca dei Borgia) - Vejano (Castello Altieri - special permission is available) - Porto di Civitavecchia (Fortezza Michelangelo) - Rome

## Civita Castellana

Forte Sangallo is a fortress near the historic village of Civita Castellana in the province of Viterbo. Since December 2014, the Ministry of Heritage and Activities has managed the Fortress and the National Museum it houses, through the Lazio Museum Complex, which became the Regional Directorate for Museums in December 2019.

The fortress rises in the western part of the city, outside the old inhabited area, on the area already occupied by the medieval fortifications to protect the only non-defensible side of the inhabited area.

Their construction began by the will of Alexander VI. Borgia (01/01/1431-08/18/1503) in 1495, a few years after his accession to the throne of San Pietro. It was part of a larger project to improve and strengthen the defensive citadels surrounding the Papal States, which was then in great expansion. The famous architect and military engineer Antonio Giamberti da Sangallo, known as the Elder (1455-1535), designed and began construction of the ambitious work. The fortress will go down in history as one of his greatest masterpieces.

After the death of Alexander VI. the building site passed into the hands of his successor Giuliano Della Rovere, who became Pope Julius II on October 5, 1503 (December 5, 1443 - February 21, 1513). He probably completed the work with Bramante (1444-04/11/1514) and certainly with the architect Antonio da Sangallo the Younger (1484-1546).



Aerial view of the fortress from the west.

Two fundamental features make the Borgia Fortress an emblematic model of the first Italian Renaissance and consecrate it as a "modern" monument: the innovative defense systems, adapted to the changing techniques of warfare, which now included the use of firearms, and its simultaneous function as a solemn one papal residence, as it contains rooms for living purposes on the ground floor, intended for the Pope and his court. The fort will remain a papal residence until the early 1800s.

After the clashes that took place nearby at the beginning of the 19th century between Neapolitans and French troops, the fortress was used as a prison and from that moment began a period of abandonment that began in 1968 and which ended with the radical restoration of all the rooms and buildings.



Curtain walls and bastions of the Sangallo Fortress in Civita Castellana.

The current appearance is the result of a difficult and lengthy restoration that has allowed the functional recovery of the monumental complex intended for the Archaeological Museum and opened to the public in 1977.



View of Sangallo Fortress from the southwest.

### **Castello Borgia in Nepi**

The Castello Borgia (also Burg Borgia or Rocca di Nepi) is a 16th-century castle in Nepi in the province of Viterbo, Italy, originally renovated for Lucrezia Borgia (04/18/1480 - 06/24/1519). The Castle features a large square piazza surrounded on all sides by walls and round towers at



each corner. Originally built in the 12th century, the castle was enlarged in the 15th century by Cardinal Rodrigo Borgia (later Pope Alexander VI) and given to his daughter Lucrezia. Borgia was governor of Nepi at that time. The castle was further renovated by the Farnese people in the 16th century, but was abandoned from the 17th century and eventually became a place of extraction for the citizens. Damaged by the French in 1798, it gradually fell into disrepair. In 1819 J.M.W. Turner made the castle the subject of a sketch during a trip. This is now part of Tate Britain's permanent collection.

In the 19th century, a proposal was made to set up a prison there and a project was also drawn up for the changes to be made. At the end of the same century, part of the ramparts of the Farnese Fortress and part of the access structures to the palace were gutted to allow the construction of a new, more direct access road to the city centre. After centuries of abandonment, from 1977 to 1981, the long work of clearing debris was carried out on a voluntary basis by the Nepi Archeoclub Section. Hundreds of tons of rubble were removed from the basement and the square of the Rocca, and the surrounding walls were also cleaned. This allowed the Municipality to award in 2006 the consolidation works of the Rocca Square, which has been in use by the public since June 2007. The Farnese-era bastions still remain abandoned.

→

The two towers of the Rocca in Nepi.



In front of the Rocca di Borgia (centre right) there is one curtain between two bastions, which protects the city to the west. A street leads through the curtain wall as access to the city.



## Castillo Altieri in Vejano

Vejano is an Italian town of about two thousand inhabitants in the province of Viterbo in Lazio, about 59 km north-west of the capital and 29 km south of Viterbo. The name may derive from Veii, the powerful Etruscan city founded in 396 BC. which was conquered by the Romans: the inhabitants who managed to flee would have moved to these lands and established a new community. In the Augustan period, Vejano became an important center because it was on the route of the Via Clodia. The current urban structure shows the forms of the Middle Ages, testimonies of the passage of the different noble families to govern the country that will succeed one another: the Anguillaras, the Prefects of Vico, the Della Roveres, the Orsinis. From 1493 to 1664 Vejano was owned by the Santacroce family and in 1670 passed into the hands of the Altieri family, who kept it for three centuries until the family died out and its property passed to the Rampolla princes of Naples, the current owners of the Castle. In 1872 Viano changed its name to Vejano. In 1927, following the reorganization of the provincial districts established by Royal Decree No. 1 of January 2, 1927 at the request of the Fascist government, when the Province of Viterbo was created, Vejano passed from the Province of Rome to the Province of Viterbo.



Google Earth - Aerial view of the fortifications in Vejano. Different size of the corner bastions.

We have reports of the first fortifications being built in the 8th century, a time when control of the territory passed from the Roman duchy to the Church. Around the fourteenth century it became a fief of the Anguillara family, to whom we owe the construction of a first fortress to control the road that comes from Bracciano. In 1493 Pope Alexander VI. destroyed and rebuilt in 1518 by Onofrio Santacroce (07/05/1492-09/21/1551). The building in its current form takes up the new criteria of military architecture of the 16th century wanted by the Borgias. Among the other families that have owned it throughout history, we mention the Orsini and the Altieri, to whom we owe some changes, including the raising of a floor of a tower. The fortress has a triangular shape and is equipped with three roundel-like bastions, which foreshadow the concept of the bastion due to their size and the continuity created between them and the walkway that runs



A dry moat encircles the rondelle-like bastions on all three sides.

along the entire perimeter. It differs from other castles in Tuscia in that the foundations are dug into the tuff: the lower part is hewn directly into the rock, while the upper part, which consists of the walls, is built of bricks. The side of the fortress facing the city has a remarkably wide moat and a bridge that still survives, while the side facing the countryside finds its defense in the three towers that are arranged to control the entire 180° arc. The lower floor, the oldest part, was used as stables and cellars, gendarmerie and prisons, while the upper brick part was the residence of the lords of Viano (ancient name of Vejano). Currently the castle is owned by Prince Francesco di Napoli Rampolla and some rooms can only be visited on request.

### **Fortezza Michelangelo in Porto di Civitavecchia**

The Lazio seaside town of Civitavecchia sits on the shores of the Tyrrhenian Sea and is just 1.5 hours from Rome. It has Etruscan roots and its name means "ancient place". Because of its long and rich history, it is dotted with beautiful buildings and interesting monuments from different eras of the past. There's one 16th-century landmark that's probably the most impressive and obvious in the whole town, and that's Forte Michelangelo. This fortress towers over the entire harbor and is the work of three of the most famous Italian architects of the Renaissance. It acts as a landmark for the city and port.

Façade of the Forte Michelangelo on the harbor side.

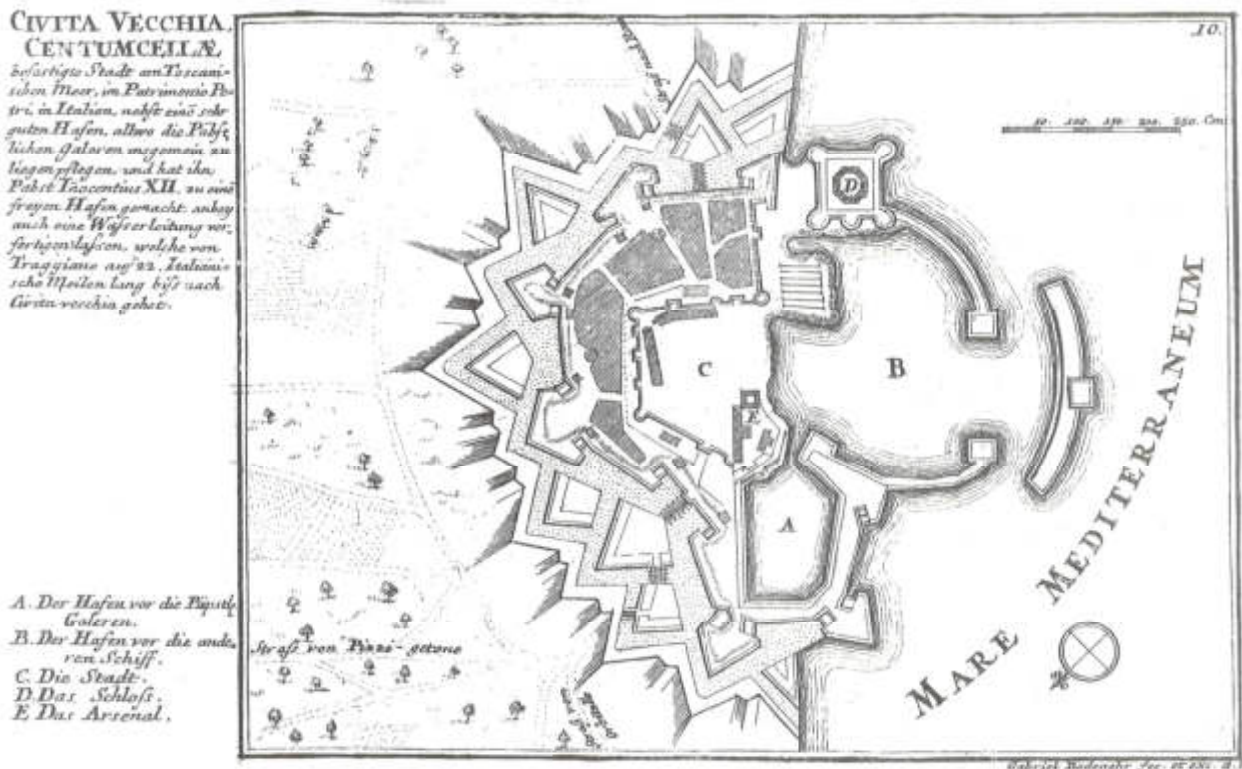




The fortress, now commonly known as "Michelangelo", which was supposed to protect the port of Civitavecchia, was begun with the laying of the foundation stone under Pope Julius II on December 14th, 1508. Built on the ruins of ancient Roman barracks, Donato Bramante, the great master of architecture, was hired to do the job. Unfortunately, he died in 1514, long before he could see his design come to fruition. The work continued under the direction of his two students, Giuliano Leno and Antonio da Sangallo. The fortress was built in 1535 under the pontificate of Paul III. completed under Antonio da Sangallo the Younger. A local tradition has it that the octagonal main tower of the fort, dominating the north flank, was designed by Michelangelo Buonarroti, hence the name of Forte Michelangelo.

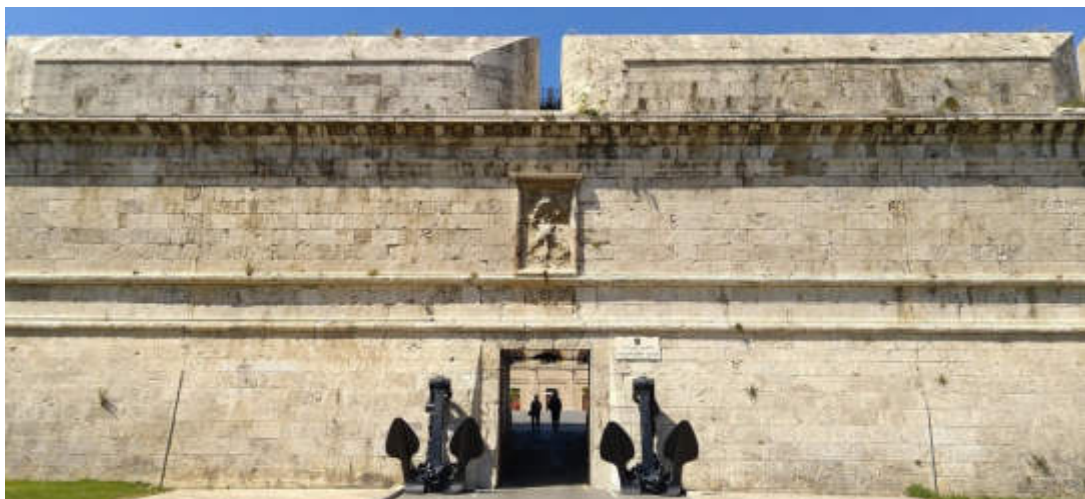


The corner bastions of Forte Michelangelo on either side of the landside situated entrance.



Civita Vecchia Centumcellae: drawing from around 1720 by Gabriel Bodenehr with entry of Forte Michelangelo, referred to here as "castle" (D)..

The imposing fortress has the shape of a square (floor plan about 100 x 120 meters) with four corner towers and an octagonal keep. On one of the towers, the eastern one, is the coat of arms of Pope Julius II, or an oak tree, indicating the place where Julius II blessed and bricked up the foundation stone. The bastions are called: San Paolo, San Pietro, San Romolo and San Giulio. According to the cardinal points, these are San Paolo in the south-east, San Pietro in the south-west, San Romolo in the north-west and San Giulio in the north-east. According to some texts they are also known as San Colombano, Santa Ferma, San Sebastiano and San Giovanni. This intimidating and impressive landmark has impossibly thick walls clad in travertine on the outside, is more than huge in size and sparkles alongside the sea. The fortress was repeatedly involved in combat operations. During World War II it suffered severe damage from air raids, but was later restored. At the beginning of the 21st century (around 2017), further renovation and reorganization and upgrading of the immediate surroundings took place. It is currently used as the seat of the Port Authority.



Forte Michelangelo - the entrance impresses with its simplicity.

**5. Day Wednesday** By Bus: Renaissance Fortresses (South Region): Rome - Ostia (Castello di 27. September 2023 Giulio II) - Nettuno (Forte Sangallo) with Landing Museum 1944 - Sermoneta (Fortified Ideal City) - Rome

### Castello di Giulio II in Ostia



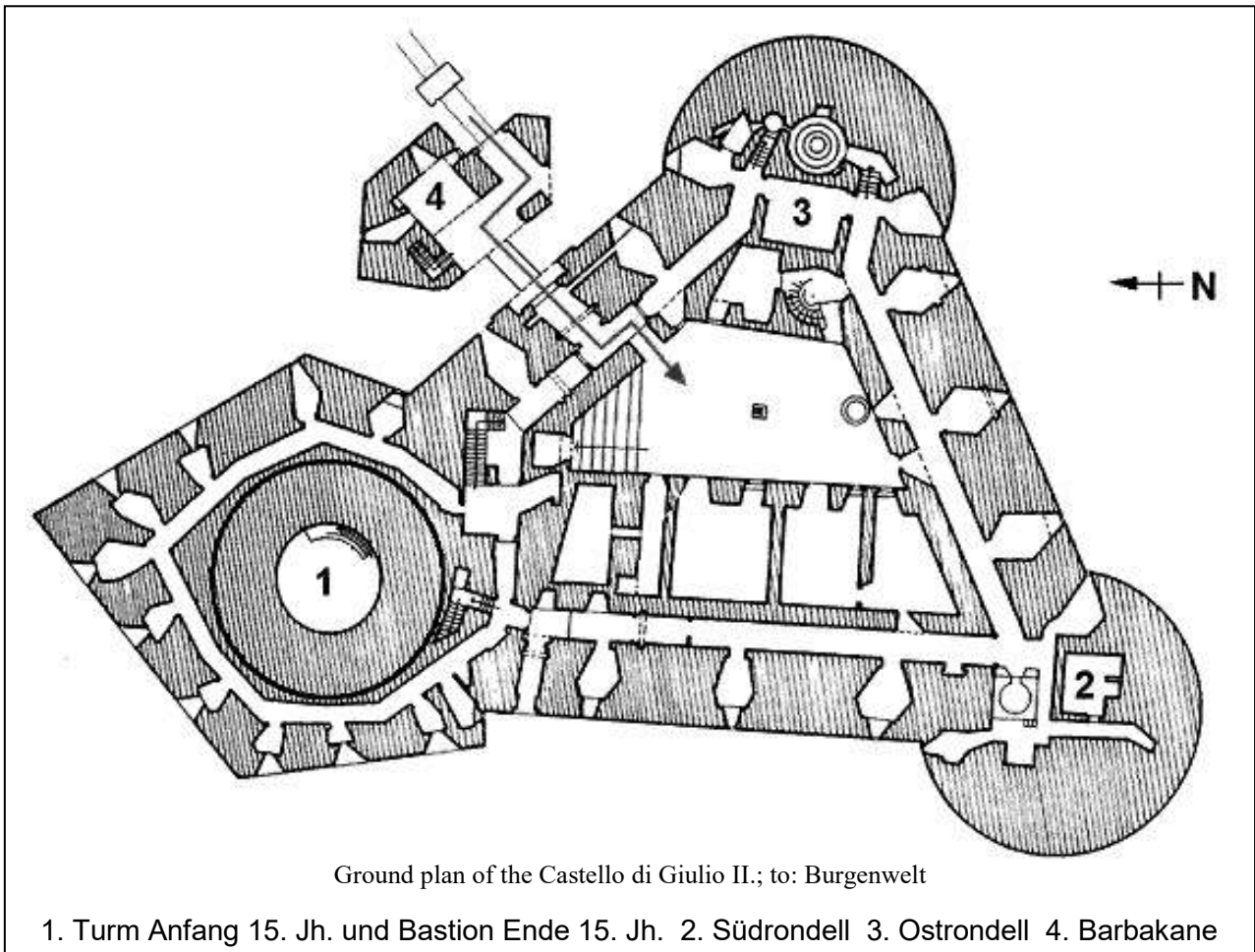
Aerial view of the Castello di Giulio II with the three terraced houses.

The Borgo di Ostia Antica area was occupied by necropolises during the imperial period. In the 5th century a basilica was built on the site of the tomb of the martyr Santa Aurea, which, restored in the following centuries, became the center in the 9th century. Around this center developed the Borgo, which was built by Pope Gregory IV († 01/25/844) to protect the few inhabitants of the area from Saracen attacks. This first inhabited nucleus, defended by a wall, received the name of its founder: Gregoriopoli.

Given the strategic importance of the area for controlling river navigation and the presence of salt pans, the monopoly of which belonged to the Curia, Pope Martin V (1368-02/20/1431) built a circular tower surrounded by a moat to guard the Tiber in the fifteenth century. Another development of the village is due to Cardinal Guglielmo d'Estouteville, Bishop of Ostia between 1461 and 1483, who restored the walls and improved the living conditions of the inhabitants by building three terraced houses that still exist today.

In the years that followed, starting in 1483, Cardinal Giuliano della Rovere, later Pope Julius II (December 5, 1443-February 21, 1513), undertook the construction of the castle at his own expense based on a project by Baccio Pontelli (~1450-1492) (as can be seen from the inscription on

the portal to the inner courtyard). The work ended three years later with pope Innocent VIII. (1432-1492).



The structure, with a triangular plan and a trapezoidal courtyard, combines the defensive ideas typical of the time with innovative forms and elements: the two round towers and the pentagonal tower of last defense anticipate solutions that became common in the 16th century. The interior staircase is decorated by Peruzzi, Cesare da Sesto and Michele del Becca. The complex is a fine example of Renaissance military architecture and includes a circuit of casemates (shooting chambers), the three towers (one of which contained the tower of Martin V), a "rivellino" (i.e. a defensive building that further protects the access door) and connect a large moat. The strategic-military value was partially weakened in the following years with the construction of residential quarters and a monumental staircase decorated with polychrome frescoes attributed to the school of Baldassarre Peruzzi (03/07/1481-01/06/1536).



A special stamp for Castello di Giulio II was printed in the "Castelli di Italia" series on September 22, 1980.



View of the east side of the Castello di Giulio II with the tower and southern roundel.

The flood that diverted the course of the Tiber in 1557 and the slow formation of malarial swamps led to the decadence of the castle and the abandonment of the village. From the 16th century the fate of the castle changed significantly. The building was damaged after the conflict between Spain and France and subsequently used as a barn. For a long period of time, the castle housed prisoners destined for forced labor, with whom Pius VII (08/14/1742-08/20/1823) and Pius IX (05/13/1792-02/07/1878) began the first archaeological excavations of Ostia Antica. Work was commissioned in the late 1980s, completed in 1991, and some of the former papal apartments turned into a museum in 2003 to restore the old palace of Julius II.



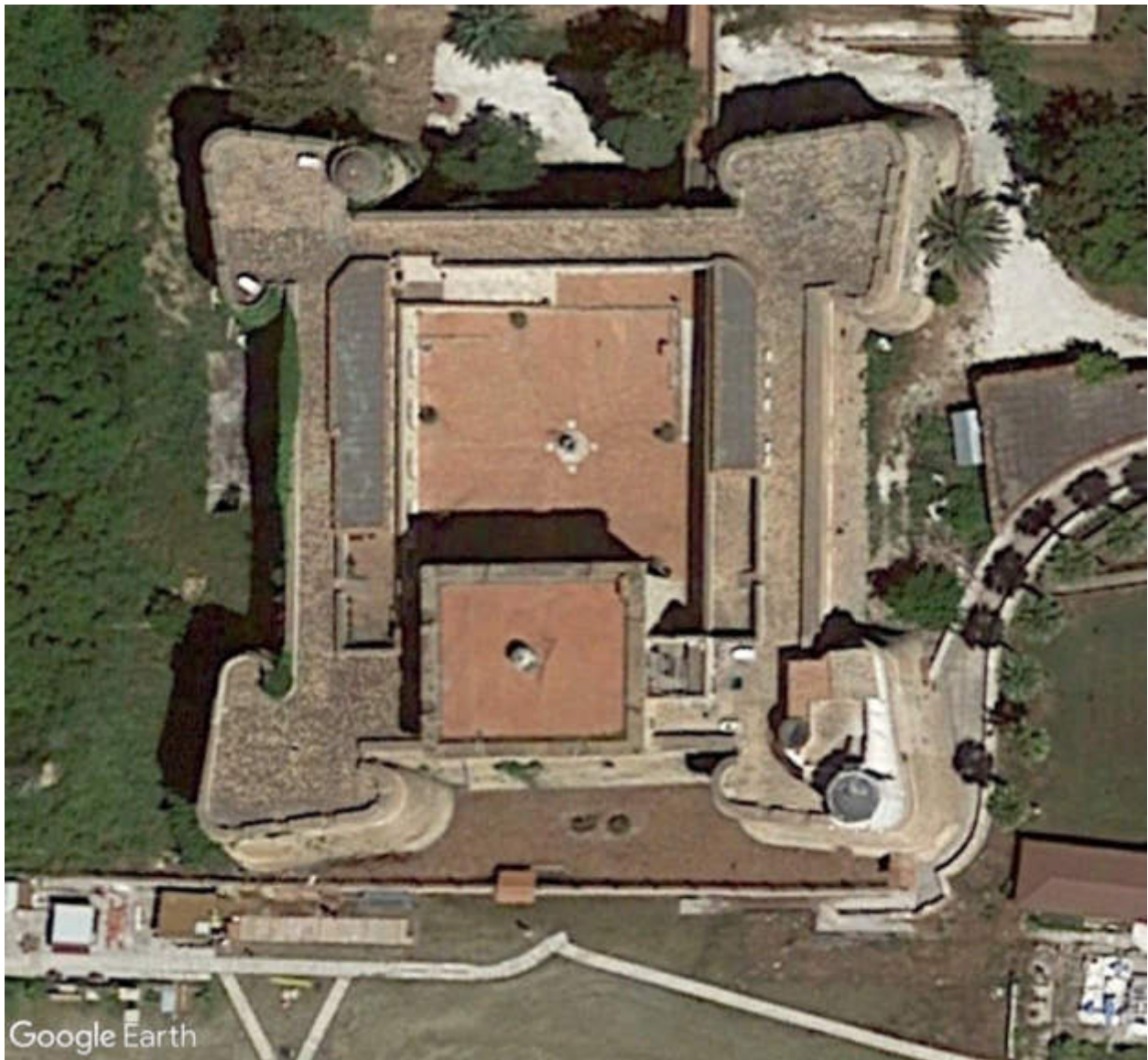
Access to the tower from inside the castle.



## Forte Sangallo in Nettuno



Forte Sangallo rises on the coast of the village of Nettuno. It was built between 1501 and 1503 by Antonio da Sangallo the Elder after a project by his brother Giuliano under the Spanish Pope Alexander VI. (01.01.1431-18.08.1503) and his son Cesare Borgia (13.09.1475-12.03.1507). Some scholars see the hand of Donato Bramante (1444-04/11/1514) in the inner entablature and the ceiling constructions. The historian Diego Angeli attributed the paternity of the building to



Google-Earth - Aerial photo of Forte Sangallo in Nettuno.

the military architect Baccio Pontelli (1450-1492). The fortress defended Nettuno, then considered the "granary of Lazio", from sea attacks. It was embedded in a well-articulated defensive system that connected the coastal towers from the Rocca di Ostia to the Gate of San Lorenzo, Torre d'Anzio and Torre Astura.



Forte Sangallo in Nettuno: View over the entrance bridge to the lake.

The important Roman noble family of the Colonna followed the Borgias as the new lords of the fortress. From 1594 the castle was governed by the Apostolic Chamber and from 1831 by the Borghese princes. During the years of fascism, the meeting between Italy and Yugoslavia with Benito Mussolini took place in the fortress on July 20, 1925 to conclude the Treaty of Nettuno, an agreement between the governments of Italy and Yugoslavia on the presence of Italians in the Dalmatia region. In 1931 the castle belonged to Baron Fassini, who hosted Queen Marie of Romania and Princess Ileana here.

The fortress rises above a 320 square meter square plan and has four perfectly square bastions. The walls are five meters thick. The height varies between 18 and 25 meters. Inside the fortress, a mighty keep rose in a central position, which was later extended with new floors to accommodate a larger garrison. A drawbridge protected by a watchtower connects the three-story fortress to the rest of the city.

Today the building is a municipal property for meetings and art exhibitions. It houses the "Museum of the Allied Landings" and the Antiquarium, which exhibits archaeological, historical and artistic material from the Nettuno area. A very precise study by the architect Cesare Puccillo was published in 1990 under the title "Nettuno, un polo del sistema difensivo costiero dello Stato Pontificio - La Fortezza dei Borgia" (= Nettuno - a post of the coastal defense system of the Papal States - The Borgia Fortress).

## Fortified ideal city of Sermoneta

Sermoneta, a center of ancient origins, is one of the most beautiful medieval villages in Lazio. The city, surrounded by mighty walls, rises on the site of the ancient city of Sulmo, the city of the Volsci, which later became a Roman colony named Sora Moneta (in honor of the goddess Giunone Moneta). The fortunes of Sermoneta begin at the end of the thirteenth century with the rule of the Caetani, who made it an important urban center first in the Middle Ages and then in the Renaissance.

The village, the castle and the cathedral date from this period. The mighty Castle of Caetani, one of the best-known examples of defensive architecture in Lazio, dominates the city and the entire Pontine plain. The village gathers around the old manor house where popes and rulers resided, which has preserved its medieval urban structure with stone houses, narrow streets with steps and ups and downs. A walk through the small historic center is enough to discover the most valuable treasures and enjoy the incredibly suggestive atmosphere.



Google-Earth - Aerial view of Sermoneta. Bottom right the Torrenuova bastion with the Mandolina-Parco d'Europa.

Like all strategically located medieval towns, Sermoneta has large walls. The first examples of fortifications date back to the second half of the 13th century, during the reign of Annibaldi, also to protect the numerous houses that were built near the castle and became an important part of the feud.



Sermoneta - Aspects of the city wall.



The arrival of the Caetani family at the end of the 13th century did not involve any changes to the existing city walls. It was not until the mid-15th century that new defenses were built, with the primary aim of encircling the entire city with walls, which had experienced a gradual demographic increase and consequent urban development beyond the old city walls.

Further fortification works were carried out during the Borgia domination between 1499 and 1503, when the new feudal lords took care of the military restructuring of the castle at the same time as that of the whole city after the advent of firearms.

The last fortifications date from the mid-16th century. The project was entrusted to Iacopo Fusti Castriotto, who built the bastion of Torrenuova and the bulwark of San Sebastiano. By this time the city had a powerful fortress that followed the canons of the more recent military architecture and overlapped the old medieval structures, making Sermoneta difficult to conquer.

The entire city wall built by the Caetani family was made of local materials (limestone), respecting the previous section of medieval wall. The city's defense systems were also adapted to the firearms used at the time, and bastions were built to defend the gates. Other architectural defensive elements were the watchtowers such as the Valeria Tower, located under the castle near the Arch of Annibaldi. In ancient times, the perimeter of the city walls included several urban gates

that formed the first wall: Porta Valeria, Porta delle Noci, Porta San Nicola, Portella, Porta Annibaldi and Porta della Carbonara. The second wall, begun by the Caetani and extended by the Borgias to make the city impregnable from a defensive and military point of view, is an extension of the first with the addition of the Porta Sorda. The third wall, commissioned exclusively by the Caetani included not only all the previous gates, but also the Porta San Sebastiano (the only gate through which carts could enter and which was equipped with a drawbridge) and the Porta del Pozzo (main entrance to the city).

Built between the 15th and 16th centuries, the Torrenuova bastion is characterized by a dovetail shape, a structure that, together with the curtain wall, ensured the city's defense on the most vulnerable point on the southern slope. This fortification leans on the old Renaissance walls and around it today the Mandolina-Parco d'Europa park has been built, a nature trail between centuries-old olive trees and imposing fortifications.

In recent years, thanks to funding from the European Community and the Lazio Region and an enormous work by the Municipality, the Renaissance walls of the historic center of Sermoneta have been restructured and a museum circuit has been created along the same walls that completely surround the city. This one is particularly suggestive, the visitor has the opportunity to take a walk from Porta delle Noci to Porta Sorda, admiring on one side the entire fortress of the historic center and on the other a landscape that from Rome to Circeo: the Castelli Romani, Ninfa, the Pontine Plain, the sea, Mount Circeo and the Pontine Islands. The one-kilometre-long path, surrounded by centuries-old olive groves, is equipped with stone pavement, vivid showcases and benches.



Sermoneta - Castello Caetani: Stairway to the castle and courtyard with belfry.

## Castello Caetani

The castle was built by the Annibaldi family at the beginning of the 13th century and served more as a military fortress at a strategic point in the area between Rome and Naples than as a noble residence. The outer walls are over ten feet thick and the entire structure is protected by a wall resting on the rock. Only the keep and a counter-tower called "maschietto" remain from this first building.

In 1297 the Annibaldi family ceded the territories of Sermoneta, Bassiano and San Donato to Pope Boniface VIII's nephew Pietro Caetani for the sum of 140,000 fiorini. The Caetani spared no effort to turn the Castle of Annibaldi into a real military fortress, with new buildings and five walls that, thanks to a system of drawbridges, made it possible to isolate the tower in the event of an attack. In the middle of the 16th century, Sermoneta experienced under Onorato III. Caetani its greatest heyday. Onorato was an energetic man, a born general, and proved it at the Battle of Lepanto.

An important detail in endangering the Caetani family was the raid on Onorato, which may have been perpetrated by the Borgias. As soon as Pope Alexander VI. (Borgia) was elected as Pope (1492), he immediately excommunicated the Caetani family and in 1500 confiscated all their fiefdoms, entrusting them to his children Cesare and Lucrezia Borgia. Alexander VI completed the seat of power with other fortifications by Antonio da Sangallo, including the construction of the citadel and the "Casa del Cardinale".

Lucrezia Borgia lived in the castle, which housed Charles V in 1536,. She was during the pontificate of Pope Alexander VI. in Sermoneta for some time. Other guests like Pope Gregory XIII. (1576) and Sixtus V, as well as other illustrious personalities, stayed at the Castello Caetani: a room in the complex bears witness to them, where the inscriptions (still preserved on a wall) of all visitors of a higher rank can be found.

The fortress has been repeatedly attacked over the centuries. In 1798 the castle was sacked by Napoleon's soldiers, who turned it into a prison and took away 36 cannons. Towards the end of the 19th century the castle returned to the Caetani family, to Gelasio Caetani, who was responsible for the impressive restoration of the old family residence. During Operation Shingle 1944 in World War II, the castle was still inhabited by the Caetani family (Roffredo and Marguerite Caetani) and settlers who had fled the Pontine plain. Since 1977 the castle has belonged to the Fondazione Roffredo Caetani, founded by the last descendant of the Caetani family from Sermoneta, Lelia Caetani, who died on January 11, 1977.

Quelle: [https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Castello\\_Caetani](https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Castello_Caetani)



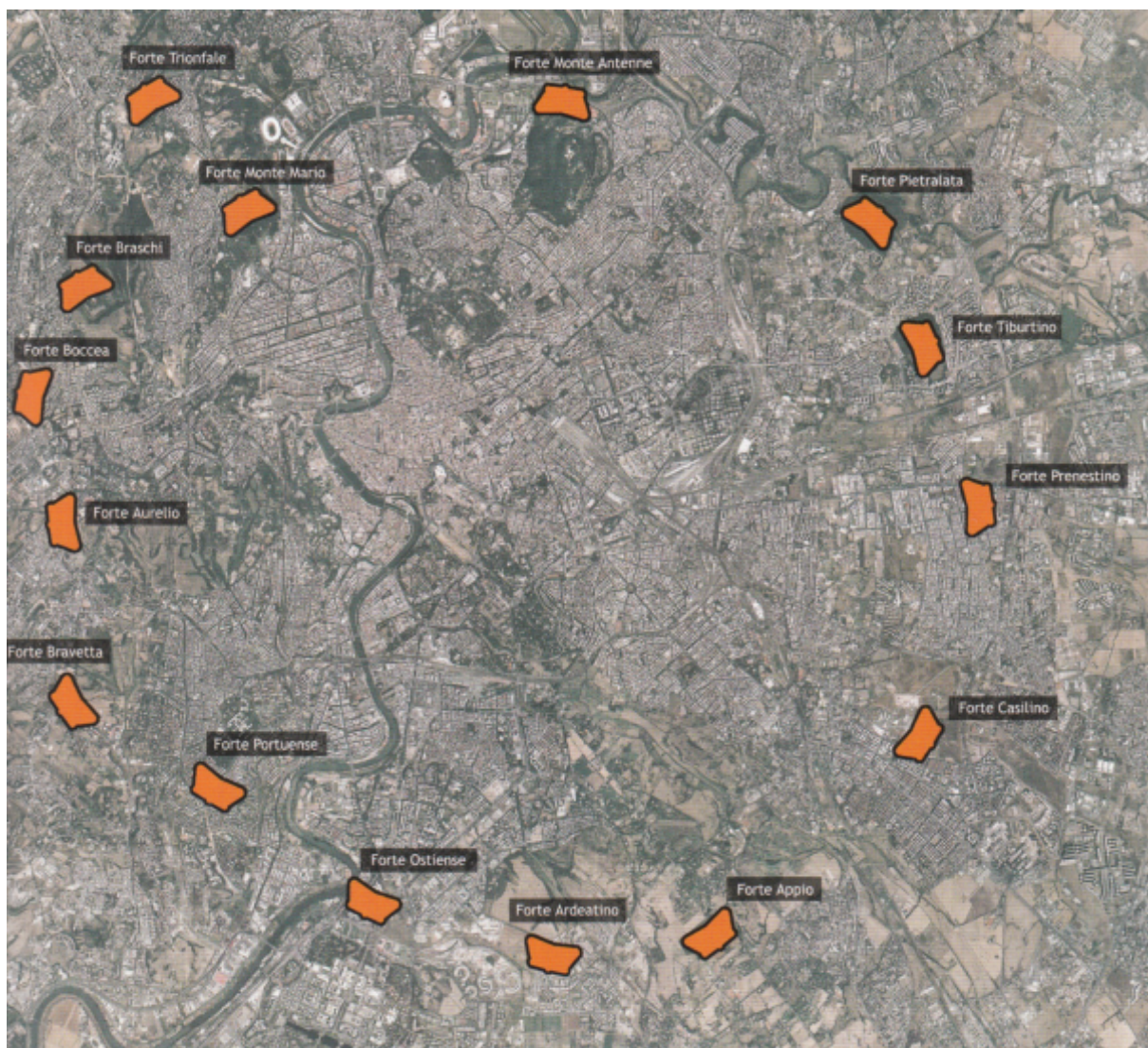
**6. Day Thursday** By bus: Campo Trincerato in Rome I (special permit):  
28. September 2023 Forte Aurelia Antica, Museo Storico del Genio Militare,  
Forte Bravetta Martyrs-Park

### Campo Trincerato in Rom

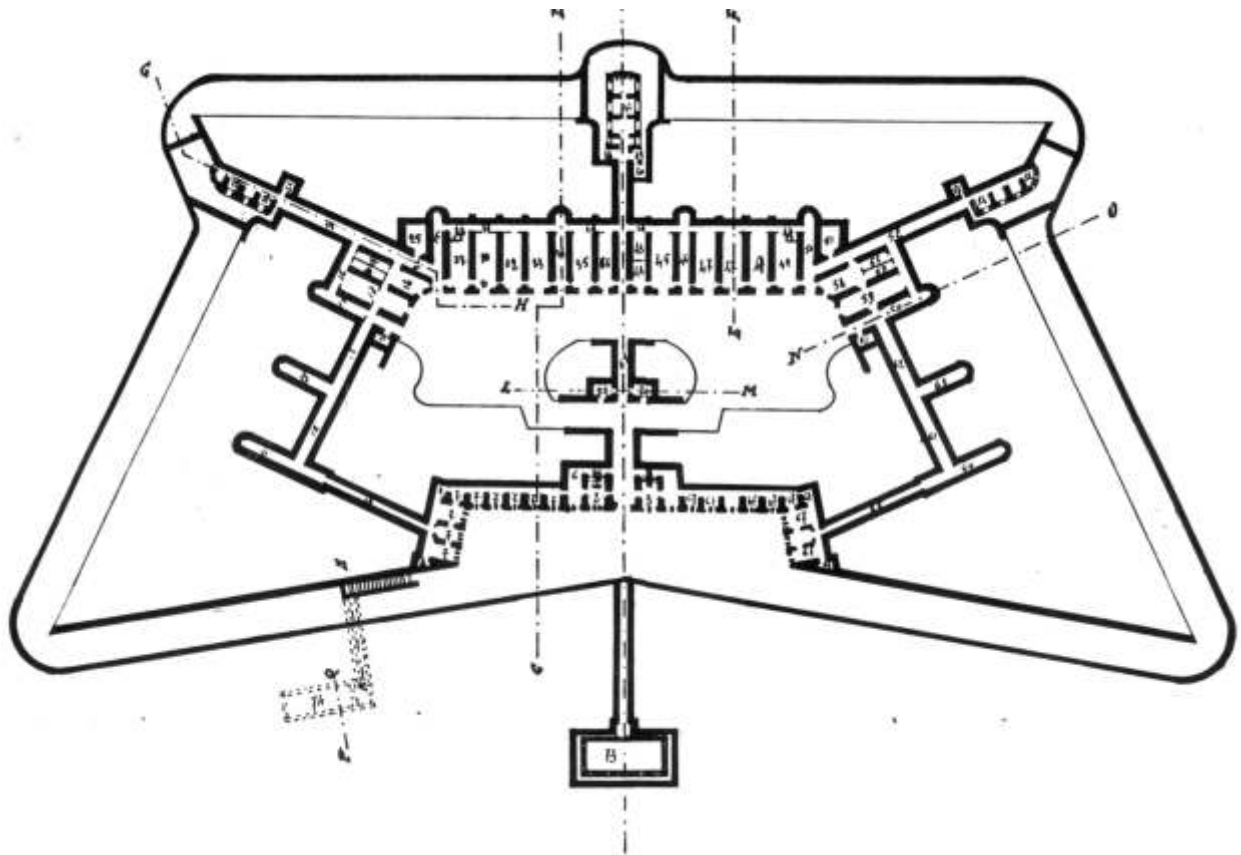
The Campo Trincerato or "Entrenched Camp" of Rome was built after 1870 to defend Rome as the capital of the newly united Kingdom of Italy and to protect it from possible invasion by the French and to prevent the intention of restoring papal sovereignty. The camp, which included fifteen forts, three batteries and a fortified wall located 3-4 kilometers from the ancient Aurelian Wall, formed a ring about 37 kilometres long. From the First World War, the defensive character lost importance and the fortresses were used for a variety of other purposes for decades. The 1962 urban planning scheme for Rome assigned permanent civilian functions to the fortresses, which have not yet been fully implemented.

The fortress system is currently in a process of abandonment and decay. It is a public heritage of significant historical, architectural, landscape and environmental value. Characterized by a strategic location, it is possible to pursue renewal through strategies and projects aimed at technological innovation, environmental sustainability, social cohesion and quality of life.

Campo Trincerato: 15 forts around Rome. The three batteries are not shown.



## Forte Aurelia Antica



Ground plan of the entire complex of Forte Aurelia Antica.

Fort Aurelia, whose design and construction began in 1877, is one of the first to be built among the 15 outer forts - and the 3 batteries - that make up what is known as the "Entrenched Camp" of Rome. The fort is located at Via Aurelia Antica 443, in the "Kefalonia-Corfu" barracks complex, headquarters of some departments of the Lazio Regional Command of the Guardia di Finanza, and belongs to the typology of so-called forts of the "Prussian" model. It is a real testimony of military architecture, of outstanding importance both on a cultural level and in terms of the interaction with the surrounding urban area.

Within the entrenched camp system of Rome, the Forte Aurelia Antica has a history full of importance, both for its strategic position in response to the most likely direction of attack of a hypothetical invading army, followed as early as 1849 by the French Expeditionary Force, and for the events that the fort have changed several times over time, its intended use and social function, which also aims at serving the city.

Since its construction, the Forte Aurelia Antica, along with the other structures of the entrenched camp, has been occupied by the Fortress Artillery Regiment (XI, then XV, then XXVII Regiment) stationed in the capital. In the event of mobilization, a garrison of 510 men (350 infantry, 150 artillerymen and 10 auxiliaries) was to be accommodated, but the emergency accommodation capacity could be increased to 700 units. In 1888 some rooms were prepared to be used by the penal colony: accommodation for 40 convicts who were to work on the ramparts and defensive walls.





In 1893, according to the historical memoirs of the 27th regiment, it housed an education department. In 1916 the fort was disarmed and its artillery concentrated on the entrenched camp of Osoppo in Friuli, only to be sent to the front from which it would never return. Along with the other forts of the entrenched camp, it was removed from the list of state fortifications in 1919; In 1928 it was the headquarters of the 8th Anti-Aircraft Artillery Regiment. Just before World War II it changed destination again to become the headquarters of the Military Chemical Regiment from 1935 to 1942. In 1943 it became the seat of the VI. blocking sector of the D.I.C.A.T. of Rome (Territorial Air Defense Militia). After its liberation from fascism, it was the seat of the capital's air defense battery. On December 29, 1944, at the request of the High Commissioner for War Refugees, it was assigned to the Red Cross as the seat of an aid station, first as a camp for refugees and displaced families and then as a hospital, which remained in operation with up to 150 beds until 1958. In that year, the Forte Aurelia Antica was handed over to the Guardia di Finanza, who set up their logistics center here, today the Administrative Department for Technical Logistics of the Lazio Regional Command.

Although the fortress has been preserved, it has been modified by various interventions. In particular, the dugouts, the stairs of the cross pieces, as well as the central caponiers and half caponiers are intact, the central cross is demolished. In 2017, the Guardia di Finanza launched an important recovery and restoration program of the fort with a view to a future museum destination.



Aerial view of the restoration work at Forte Aurelia Antica.

## Museo Storico del Genio Militare - Historical Museum of Military Engineers



The Historical Museum of the Corps of Engineers occupies the entire ground floor of the building, covering approximately 4,400 m<sup>2</sup>, and it testifies to the deep connection between civil society and the Corps of Military Engineers in all areas of engineering and architecture. Before entering the museum there are two halls of honor with relics of Lieutenant of the Corps of Engineers Camillo Benso Count de Cavour and General Federico Menabrea, scientist and prime minister.

The Museum of the Institute of History and Culture of the Corps of Engineers was founded by the Captain of the Corps of Engineers Mariano Borgatti and inaugurated in 1906 as the Museum of Military Technology in Castel Sant'Angelo. In 1911 it was transferred to Urban VIII's Casermette (small barracks) and named it the Historical Museum of Military Technology. In 1928 the Institute for Military Architecture was founded next to the museum. In the early 1930s, following the decision to turn the area around Castel Sant'Angelo into a public park, the museum and institute were transferred to the Piave barracks, giving rise to the Institute of History and Culture of the Corps of Engineers. Since 1939, the institute has been in its current location, built specifically for this purpose, at Lungotevere della Vittoria 31. The museum displays the materials used by the Corps in different periods. Other documents illustrate the development of transmissions, military photography and aerial photography. The participation of the Pioneer Corps in the various wars from the Risorgimento to the two world wars is also documented. The Firstair aircraft used in the war is also on display. In the courtyard is a memorial chapel dedicated to the protector of Santa Barbara's engineers. The Corps of Engineers Historical and Cultural Institute (based on Lungotevere delle Vittorie - probable site of the now-lost Tevere Battery) preserves documents and a very interesting library, as well as a museum of engineers and military fortifications of great importance.



Historical Museum of Military Engineers at Lungotevere della Vittoria 31.

## Forte Bravetta



Fort Bravetta, the place of execution of prisoners sentenced to death, is one of the most symbolic places of the Roman resistance and dedicated to the memory of all those who lived there during the German occupation (09/11/1943 - 06/03/1944). The death sentences carried out between 1932 and 1945 totaled one hundred and nineteen.

Built between 1877 and 1883, Fort Bravetta was part of the Campo Trincerato, or 'the entrenched camp', built after 1870 to defend Rome as the capital of the newly unified Kingdom of Italy. It is on Via Bravetta 741.

It was intended to defend the southwestern section of the Agro Romano, the agricultural belt around Rome. Used for military defense exercises up to the First World War, it later served as a warehouse, shooting range and later also as a gunpowder store and archive. The history of the fort was dramatically marked by its use from 1932 as a place where the death sentences imposed by the Special Court for the Defense of the State (established by the fascist government in 1926) were carried out. With the fall of fascism (July 25, 1943) the tribunal was abolished.

After September 8, 1943, Fort Bravetta was the scene of executions of fighters of the Roman resistance, and after the liberation of the city (June 4, 1944) the same fate befell the fascists and those who had collaborated with the Germans.

Disused in 1996, the State Property Agency of the Department of Defense turned over the property in February 1997. The enactment of an amendment to the town plan in 1997 and the establishment of the Valle dei Casali Regional Nature Reserve have freed the Fort Bravetta area for other uses. On September 9, 2009, in a ceremony attended by high-ranking civil and military authorities as well as representatives of Roman partisan organizations, the surrounding park was given back to the city and named in memory of the "Martyrs of Fort Bravetta".

**7. Day Friday**      [By bus: Campo Trincerato in Rome II \(special permit\):](#)  
[29. September 2023](#)   [Forte Appia Antica; Forte Prenestina; Forte Monte Antenne](#)

## Forte Appia Antica

Listed as a Historical Monument since August 5th, 2008, the Fort Appia Antica was built between 1877 and 1880 and cost 984,430 lire. Built to the right of the Via Appia Antica, it controlled the estates of Tor Carbone and Torricola and access to the city from the nearby Via Appia.

The plan of the fort is an isosceles trapezoid with a "projecting" symmetrical central front and gorge. Similar to the fortresses of Monte Mario and Aurelia Antica, it has a large moat at the front of the gorge defended by a partially covered Carnot wall, the main front with dugouts and central caponiers and lateral semi-caponiers, central detached casemate corps (with partially used powder storage rooms used) in a line with the entrance protected by the ravelin. The level of the wall can be reached by two symmetrical ramps attached to the sides of the central casemate corps. It is the only fortress in Rome to have a drawbridge with a "poncelet" mechanism with visible counterweights and a lifting chain. It is equipped with a powder magazine in a cave to the right of the drawbridge, which is reached through a tunnel under the gorge front moat, a spring water well and two cisterns.

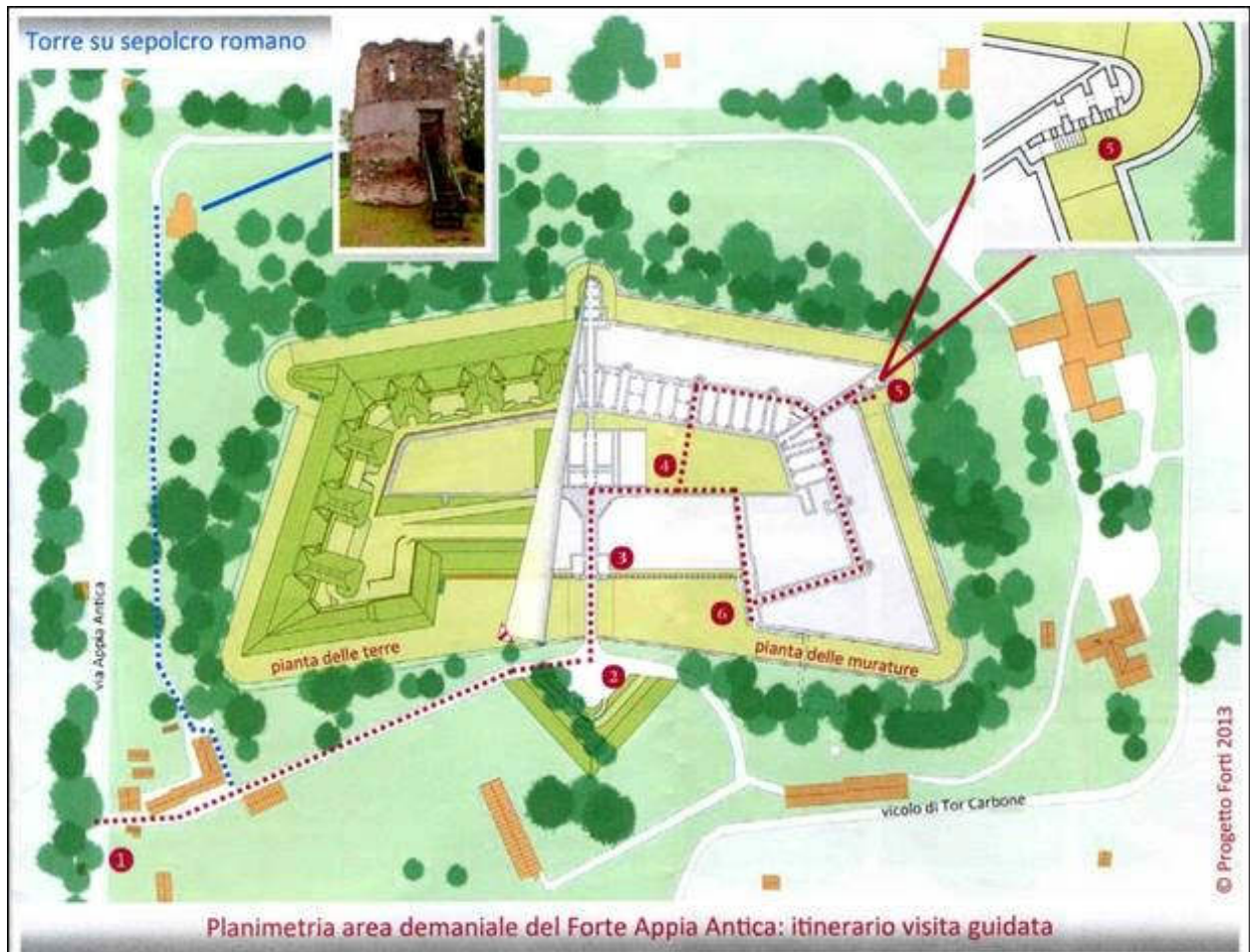


Casemate Corps in Fort Appia Antica.



Google Earth - Aerial view of Fort Appia Antica.

The fort had been used as the headquarters of the Aeronautical Corps Artillery Directorate since the 1910's. Between the 1980s and 1990s it was used as a data center by the Air Force's Department for Automated Information Systems, some of which still use it as a depot. The fort's state of preservation is generally good. Except for the installation on the inside of the embankment of a building front, all underground volumes, the powder magazine and the profiles of the ramparts and the moat have been preserved in their original form. The right side of the shelters underwent a functional and vegetal adaptation that did not change the architecture, the corresponding part of the parade ground was also paved and the current canopy was closed. The drawbridge survives, as does the front door, frieze and ravelin outside the fort. Despite the change, the windows were preserved.



Plan of the state area of the Forte Appia Antica: guided tour. Graphics: Progetto Forti Roma.

### The necropolis of the Forte Appia Antica

In 1877, during the years of urban transformation of Rome, which became the capital of the new Kingdom of Italy, earthworks began for the construction of Fort Appio, a military fortress still in use, located in the Muracci dell'Ospedaletto area within the IVth mile of Via Consolare. The fortress has a trapezoidal plan with a large moat at the front.

During the excavations for the construction of the fort, an important Roman-era necropolis was found, which can be dated between the Augustan period and the 3rd century AD. Under the direction of the two archaeologists Lanciani and Fiorelli, among other things, a villa and a huge tomb containing more than 80 inscriptions came to light. Many of the epitaphs discovered at that time are now kept in the mausoleum of Cecilia Metella.

Thanks to the collaboration between institutions, the military complex has recently been opened to visitors for special events such as the “Cancelli Aperti” event or the “Open House”. The association PROGETTO FORTI occupies a special position, whose efforts consist in bringing the fortification heritage of Rome to the attention of a broader public.

## **Forte Prenestina**

Forte Prenestina was built between 1880 and 1884 at a cost of 1,253,400 lire. Located to the right of Via Prenestina, it guarded the entire front area between Via Casilina and Via Tiburtina. The fort is now at Via Federico Delpino 187.

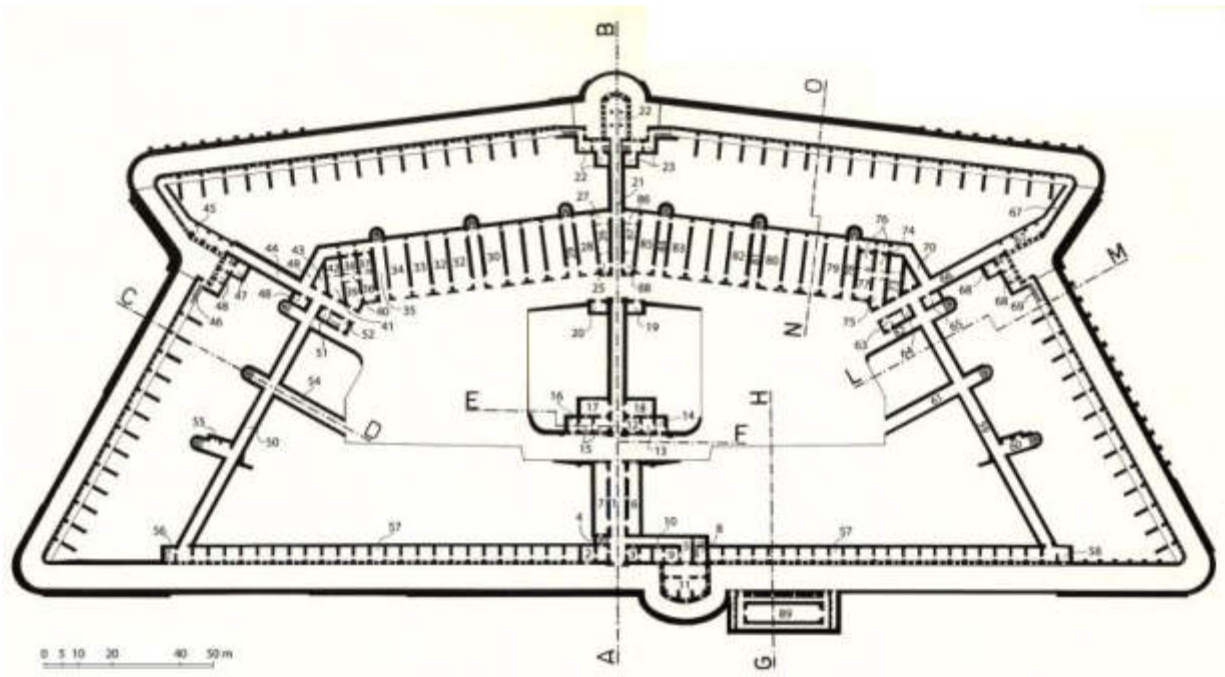
The layout of the fort is an isosceles trapezium with a prominent exterior front and a straight moat front with symmetrical sides. The enclosing moat is defended by a central caponier and lateral half caponiers, by a Carnot-type wall exposed on the sides and covered on the external front and on the front of the moat. The level of the wall can be reached via two ramps. It is equipped with a powder magazine, the double entrance of which is placed in the ditch on the right with two spring water wells.

The fort was used as a depot for artillery material until the 1970s. In 1977 it was handed over to the city of Rome, which initiated an expropriation procedure that was not completed. After a short opening period, the fortress remained closed until 1986, when it was occupied by the social center of the same name, which still manages the structure.

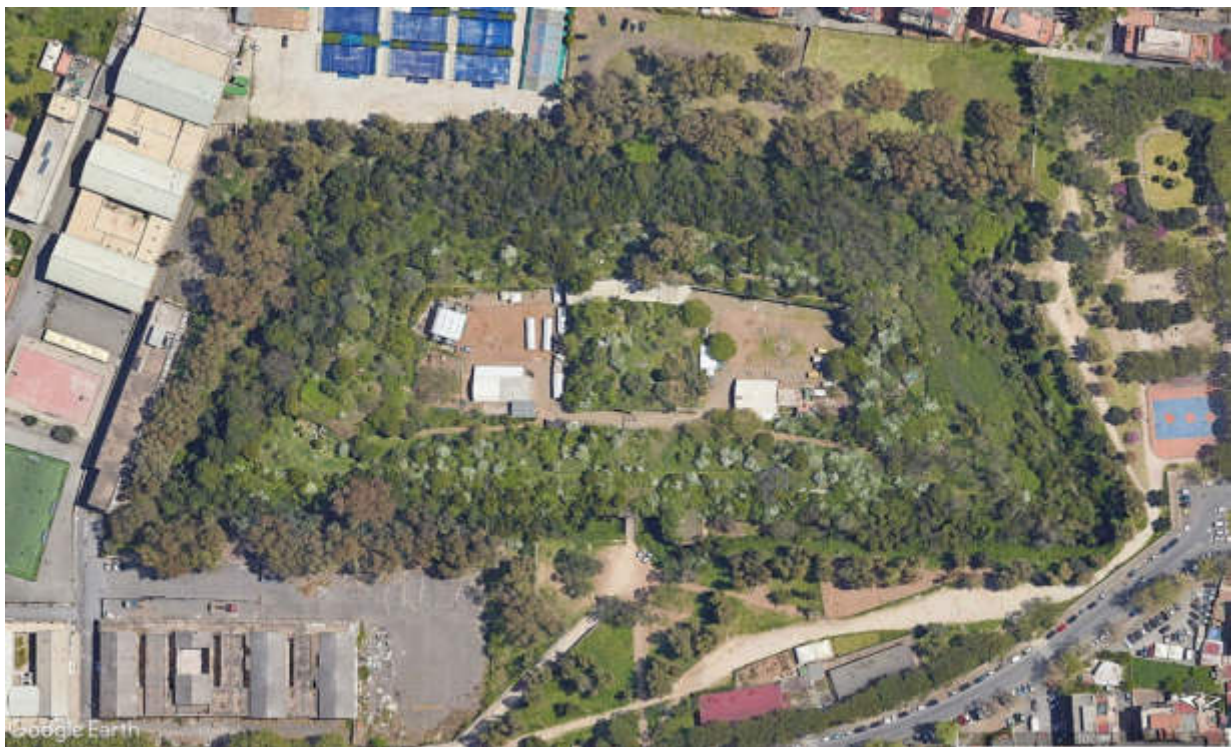
The fort is in a good state of preservation as it has remained unchanged over time. It presents all underground structures and the profiles of the ramparts in their original form, as well as the parade ground, which still has an earth base, with the typical cobblestone collection channels for surface water. The elevations of the parade ground and some of the galleries have been superficially modified over the course of more than twenty years by graffiti and murals using various techniques. The moat, the Carnot walls and the powder magazine, the drawbridge as well as the ravelin outside the fortress have been preserved. Also preserved are the windows and the cast-iron parapet on the rampart, the front door and the frieze, although cemented. The fort is registered as a cultural monument.



Civil, peaceful and lively life in the former military casemates of Fort Prenestina.



Floor plan and Google Earth - Aerial view of Fort Prenestina.



CSOA Forte Prenestina is a large self-governing social center in the fort of the same name. CSOA (Italian: Centro Sociale Occupato Autogestito) means “Occupied Self-governing Social Center”. The squatters cleaned up the site and removed the garbage dumped there. Forte Prenestina is an "important hub for the production of cultural and political events" and hosts many groups and events within its 13 hectares.

Forte Prenestina was built between 1880 and 1884. It was one of fifteen forts in Rome built during this period and never used in combat. It fell into disrepair in the 1950s and was used by the city of Rome as a garbage dump from 1977. CSOA Forte Prenestino was cast on May 1, 1986 during a "Festival of Non-Work".

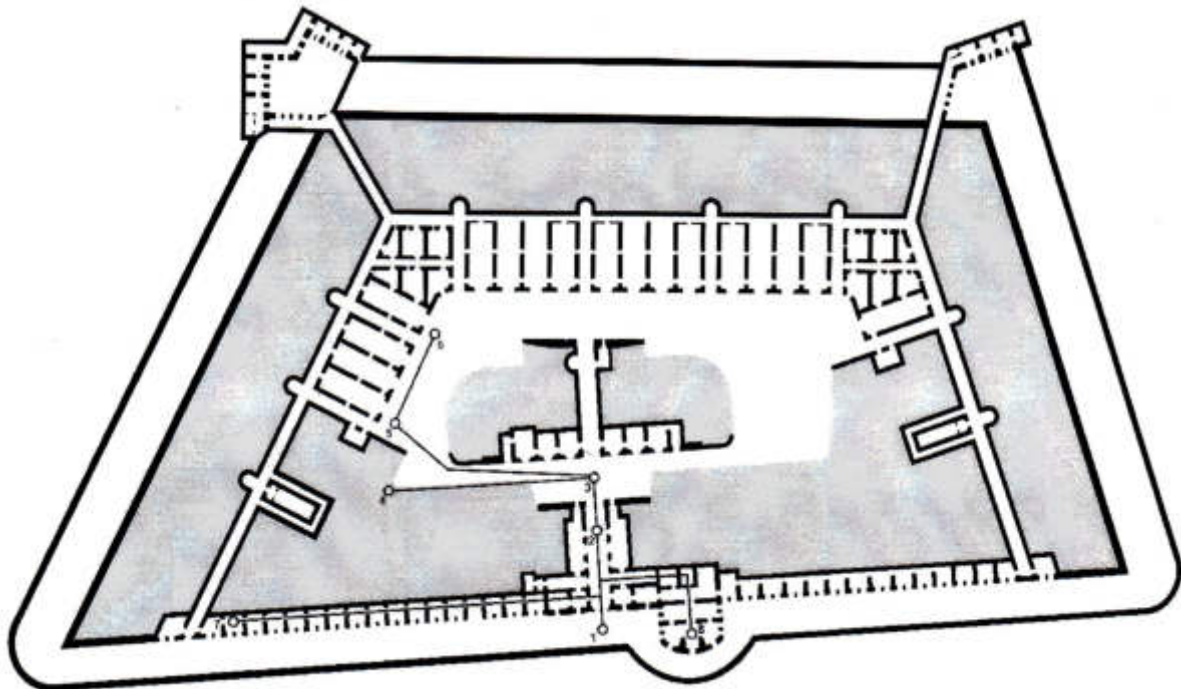
The size of the center allows it to accommodate many groups and activities. In 1996 Steve Wright wrote: "Forte Prenestina plays an important role in its local community. It houses an exhibition gallery, practice rooms for bands, rooms for theatrical performances, a darkroom, a gym and a café. Courses are held there, there is a documentation center and there are regular film evenings, courses on design and sculpture".

Outside of Rome, the fort is best known for its music label, featuring local rap and reggae bands. The magazine 'Nessuna Dipendenza' documents the activities of the Forte and takes part in political discussions and debates. The rap group Assalti Frontali established a recording studio in the fort in the 1990s. Many internationally known bands such as Autechre, Fugazi (5 times) and Test Department have played in the center of the fort.

There is also an anti-fascist gymnasium. Other activities include an info shop, a bicycle repair shop, a children's playground, a garden with a flora guide, and a herb shop. Organizations utilizing various areas include a cinema, bar, theatre, permanent exhibition area, tattoo and piercing studio, tea room and organic farmers market.

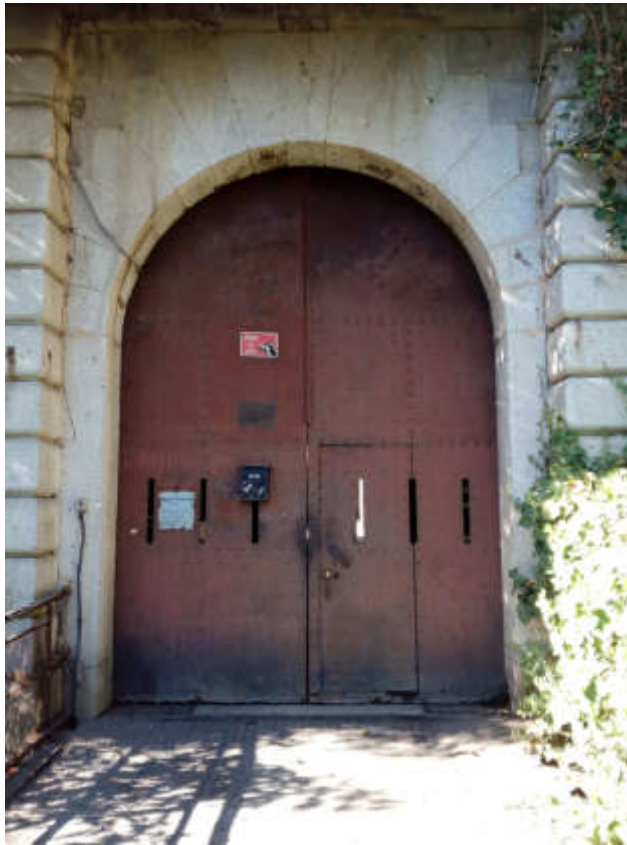
### **Forte Monte Antenne**

Forte Antenne is one of the 15 forts built in Rome (Italy) between 1877 and 1891. It is located in Q. II Parioli, in Municipio II, in the Villa Ada area. The fortress is on the site of the city of Antemnae conquered by Romulus.



Floor plan of the Fort Monte Antenne.





The fortress, which covers an area of 2,5 hectares, was built from 1882 and completed in 1891 on the eponymous Monte Antenne near the confluence of the Aniene River and the Tiber.

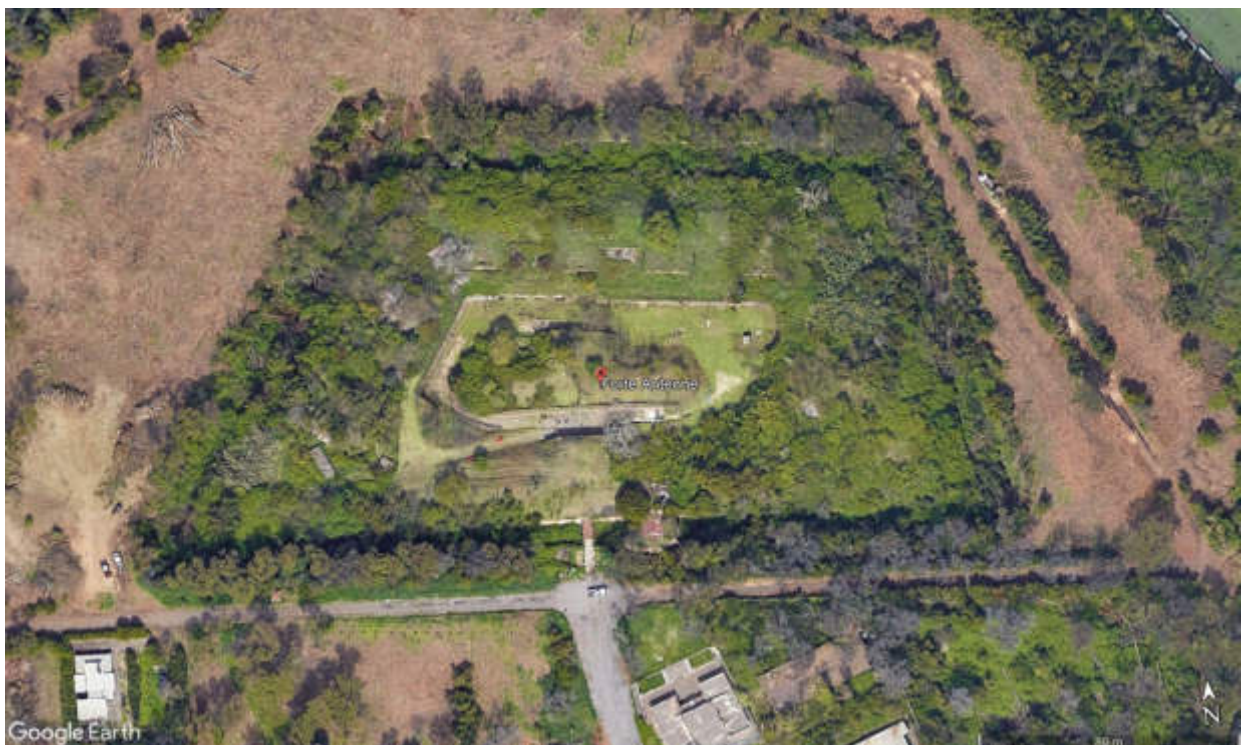
Until the 1940s it was used as a signal corps depot and then closed. Part of the fortress was taken over by the Municipality of Rome, which only partially used it; the rest was occupied by military units.

In 1958, on the occasion of the upcoming 1960 Rome Olympic Games, the state sold the fort to the city of Rome to use as a campsite. However, this was only built in the surrounding park, as there were already some private dwellings within the fortress.

← Entrance portal with iron gate to the fortress.



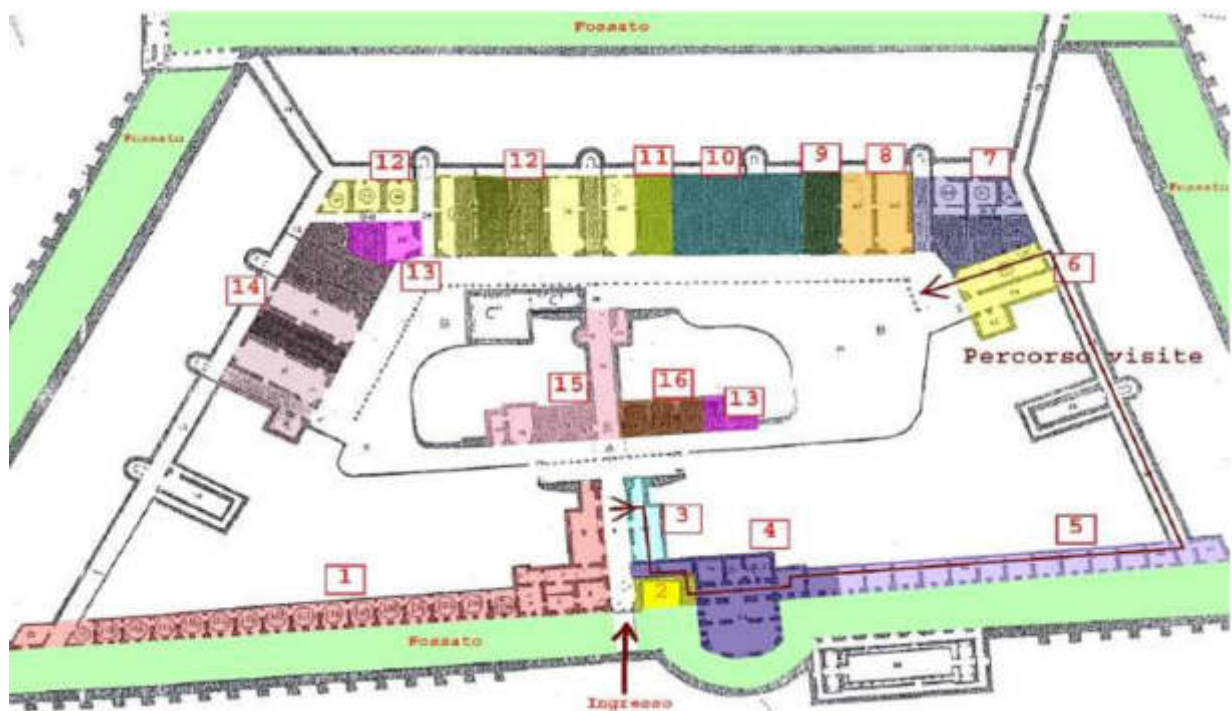
↑ Some interior and exterior aspects of Fort Monte Antenne. Google Earth Aerial View. ↓



According to recent information, the fort and its complex should be part of a redevelopment plan aimed at converting it into a hotel or a branch of the nearby LUISS University.

According to the Code of Cultural and Landscape Heritage, the fortress is a protected area by Ministerial Decree of August 6th, 2008.

The fort controlled the northern front of the city, the Via Salaria and the Rome - L'Aquila - Pescara railway line. The layout of the fortress is a trapezoidal quadrilateral, with the two straight fronts not being parallel and the sides being asymmetrical due to the orography of the hill. The enclosing moat is defended by lateral caponiers leaning against the counterscarp, similar to those of the Trionfale Fort, by a Carnot-style covered wall at the front of the moat, where, to the right of the entrance to the fortress, is the flanker-casemate in the gorge defended by the Ravelin. The level of the rampart can be reached by two ramps attached to the sides of the central casemate corps. The fort is equipped with a powder magazine, the double entrance of which is placed on the moat to the right of the flanker-casemate in the gorge defended, a spring water well and a cistern.



Revitalization proposal for Fort Monte Antenne to create a hostel for cycle tourists within the framework of the European cycle path network EuroVelo

The fort is preserved and almost unchanged, although it has not been maintained for over thirty years. It presents all the subterranean volumes and the profiles of the ramparts in their original form, as well as the parade ground, the moat and the relative Carnot-style caponiers and walls. Canopies, mezzanines, toilets in some of the shelters and window openings in the flanker-casemate in the gorge used for residential purposes have been added. The drawbridge, which is in need of restoration, has also been preserved.

8. Tag Saturday      By bus: in the morning: Rome urban area: Italian/German Bunkers -  
30. September 2023      afternoon: Mussolini-Bunker Monte Soratte - Rome

## Mussolini's Bunker in Villa Torlonia Park



Bunker complex Villa Torlonia: entrance in the park, toilet corner, access tunnel.

After the outbreak of World War II, Italy's dictator Benito Mussolini worried about his safety. In the event of an air raid, he therefore had underground shelters built. It is no ordinary wine cellar located at Villa Torlonia in Rome. The Duce had the once magnificent Villa Torlonia taken from a Roman noble family. He moved into his residence there shortly before the start of the Second World War. In 1940, Benito had the wine cellar expanded into a bomb and gas attack-proof retreat with meter-thick walls and airtight doors.

In addition to the premises, a machine can still be seen today that could have cleaned the poisoned air in the event of a gas attack. The bunker is the only completed one of three planned rooms that Mussolini had commissioned to build at the time. The building had fallen into dis-repair over the past decades. It was only restored a few years ago and made publicly accessible again in 2006.

However, the escape room didn't really help the Duce. After the defeat of the Italian fascists, partisans executed the dictator in 1945.

**Subject to the necessary permits, further bunker inspections are planned for the course of the morning. More information will be announced at the latest on the tour.**

## The Bunker system Soratte



In the bowels of Mount Soratte, a few kilometers north of Rome, is one of the most important examples of military engineering in Italy. At this point, in a strategic and dominant position above the Tiber valley, on the outskirts of the town of Sant'Oreste, a huge underground structure was built in 1937 at the behest of Mussolini to officially house a Breda factory, the Officine Protette, but in reality most likely, to ensure the security of the highest authorities of the state and of the Italian army in the event of an enemy attack. The entire work, including the protection and reinforced concrete lining of the tunnels, was carried out at a very rapid pace in just four and a half years, using local and northern Italian workers, under the direction of the military engineers of Rome. The entire underground structure was excavated in the limestone with explosives and the material reclaimed to build the barracks placed outside, to generate the inertia required for the

concrete of the tunnels' vault lining, and to fill in the outside slopes to create an easy access route. Even before the work was completed, the Breda plant at Torre Gaia was partly relocated to the inner part of the underground complex, which German troops immediately occupied in 1943. After the withdrawal in 1944, the refuge was abandoned to be partially converted into a nuclear bunker for the Italian government in the 1960s. In 1972, however, work was stopped, leaving the structure incomplete. In 2001 the Italian Military Property Office shut down the outside area and barracks and in 2007 the Hypogeum complex. Only three of the five barracks have been renovated so far, and the impressive site houses a historical museum dedicated to Mount Soratte. To date, the bunker is one of the most interesting Italian works of modern military engineering, especially from a constructive point of view.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4RHOxTHwENY>

Filme: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LIB6ZkN1fY4>



Massif of Mount Soratte



Tunnel entrances during construction 1939 ff.



Vehicle exhibition in the tunnels

**9. Day Sunday**  
01. October 2023

Check out of the Hotel IBIS Styles Aurelia\*\*\*\*, Transfer to the airport Fiumicino (FCO), 10:00 a.m. Check-in for the flight (LH 1867 recommended) to Munich

Text and Fotos: Internet / Google Earth / Wikipedia / Archive Dr. Neumann  
We reserve the right to make changes to the program.

**Registration documents available at:** [hrv.neumann@t-online.de](mailto:hrv.neumann@t-online.de)

**Application deadline:** 14. April 2023

Status: 20. February 2023

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