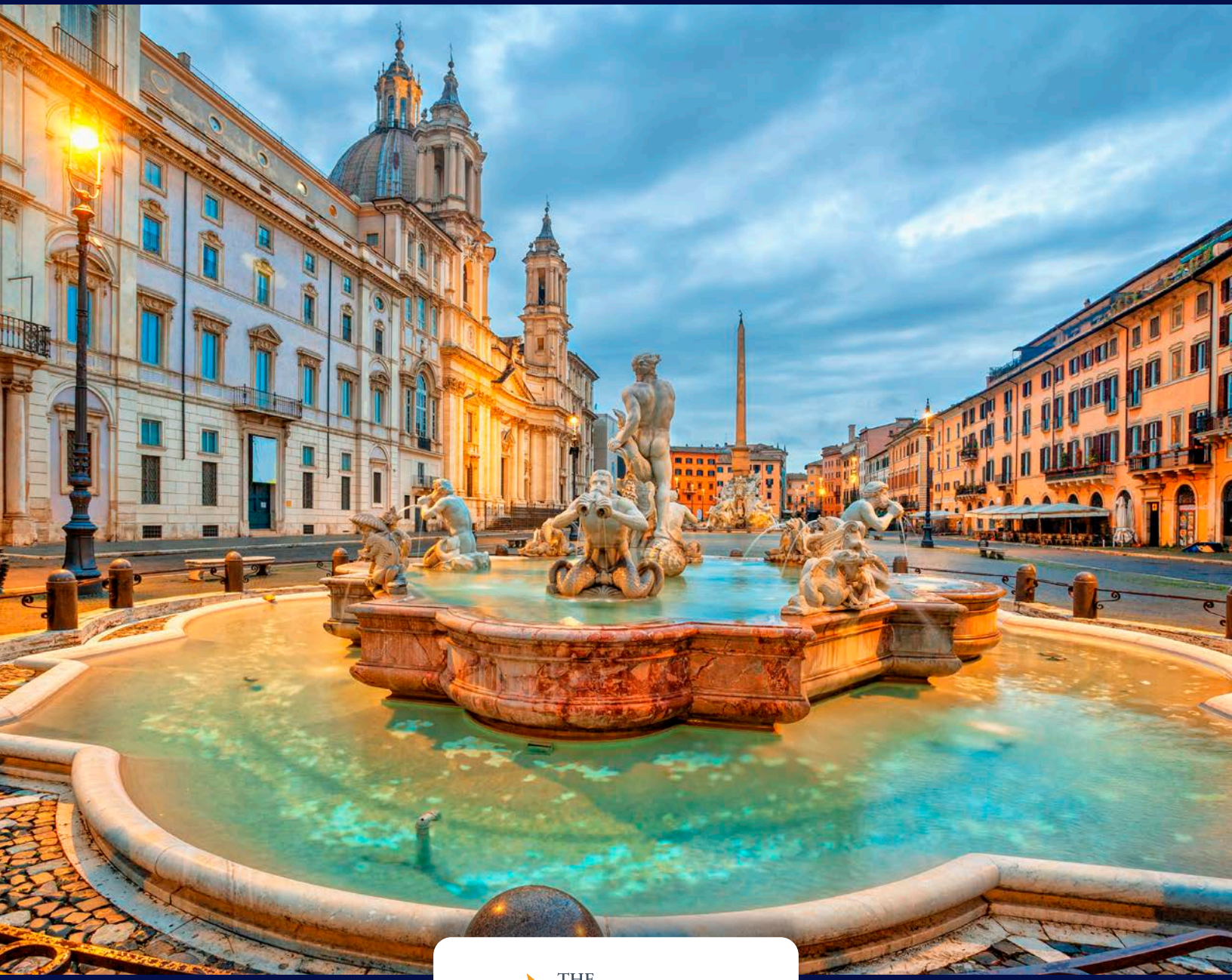


Rome in the Time of the Caesars

with Dr. Hans-Friedrich Mueller

March 13–19, 2027 | November 27–December 3, 2027



Never stop learning.



Call today 1-855-476-5080



March 13–19, 2027
November 27–December 3, 2027
From: \$7,995 per person



Rome in the Time of the Caesars

with Dr. Hans-Friedrich Mueller

Experience the Eternal City as it was shaped, ruled, and imagined at the height of imperial power, when emperors and institutions defined the rhythms of Roman life. Guided by a distinguished classical scholar specializing in Roman religion, law, and historiography, this immersive journey explores Rome not simply as a collection of monuments, but as a living imperial capital—one where emperors, senators, priests, and ordinary citizens moved through spaces charged with ritual, authority, and memory.

Through on-site lectures and interpretive walks, participants learn to “read” temples, forums, imperial residences, and early Christian spaces as active instruments of governance and belief during the age of the Caesars. Drawing on ancient texts and material culture, your expert guide reveals how myth underpinned imperial legitimacy, how ritual structured daily life, and how architecture projected the emperor’s presence across the city. The result is a richly layered experience that illuminates not only how Rome ruled an empire, but how imperial ideas of power, citizenship, and sacred authority continue to shape Western thought.

Your Journey Expert



Dr. Hans-Friedrich Mueller is the Chair of Classics and the Thomas B. Lamont Professor of Ancient and Modern Literature at Union College. Known for his broad expertise and enthusiastic teaching style, Professor Mueller has decades of experience teaching and leading tours of ancient Rome. Professor Mueller won the American Philological Association's Award for Excellence in the Teaching of Classics at the College Level, as well as two awards for excellence in teaching at The Florida State University. At the University of Florida, he developed a graduate distance-learning program in classics for high school teachers. He earned his PhD in Classical Philology from The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. In addition to writing numerous articles, Professor Mueller is the author of *Roman Religion in Valerius Maximus*, the editor of an abridged edition of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, and the translator of Andreas Mehl's *Roman Historiography: An Introduction to Its Basic Aspects and Development*. He has created three Great Courses: *Latin 101: Learning a Classical Language*, *Greek 101: Learning an Ancient Language*, and *The Pagan World: Ancient Religions Before Christianity*.

Highlights

- Discover how temples, basilicas, and public spaces functioned as instruments of religion and statecraft, shaping civic identity through ritual, law, and memory.
- Uncover how emperors used architecture, mythology, and spatial design to express divine authority.
- Explore the Colosseum and Baths of Caracalla to understand how entertainment and leisure reinforced hierarchy, generosity, and Roman values.
- Examine catacombs and early basilicas to trace religious transition and coexistence within the imperial city.



Rome in the Time of the Caesars

Itinerary



Day 1: Arrivals and Orientation: Layers of the Eternal City

Arrive in Rome and settle into your hotel before an afternoon orientation walk through the historic center. Stroll from the Spanish Steps to the Trevi Fountain and Piazza Navona, where ancient foundations support Renaissance and Baroque masterpieces. Along the way, your expert introduces Rome as a layered city—where pagan temples become churches and imperial roads anchor modern streets. A welcome dinner with your expert and fellow travelers near the ancient Theatre of Pompey sets the stage for the week ahead, offering an informal introduction to Rome's deep intertwining of daily life, politics, and ritual.

Included Meal: Dinner

Accommodations: Hotel Viminale



Day 2: Foundations of Rome: Religion, State, and Empire

Begin with a focused morning lecture from your expert, which examines the journey from religious ritual to politics and law. This foundation prepares you to interpret the Roman Forum as the sacred and political heart of the Republic and Empire. On site, basilicas reveal legal and religious authority, triumphal arches narrate conquest and legitimacy, and the Temple of Vesta exemplifies Rome's dependence on ritual continuity. The Temple of Divus Julius introduces the elevation of political figures to divine status. In the afternoon, a visit to the Domus Aurea highlights how imperial architecture and mythological imagery transformed a personal residence into a stage for divine kingship.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodations: Hotel Viminale



Day 3: Palatine Hill: The Divine Emperors

The Palatine Hill offers a commanding view—both literal and symbolic—of imperial power. Led by your expert, stroll through the remains of the Domus Augustana and Domus Flavia to see how emperors curated visibility, access, and authority. Domestic spaces,

“We inhabit a world created by ghosts—from the words we speak to the laws we obey and the gods we worship. In Rome, these ghosts are visible, and I am excited to introduce you to them.”

– Dr. Hans-Friedrich Mueller



including those associated with imperial women, reveal the intimate side of rulership. In the afternoon, the Capitoline Museums deepen the story through sculpture, inscriptions, and cult objects that illuminate Rome’s gods, heroes, and rulers. Together, these sites demonstrate how religion, art, and governance were inseparable in Roman life.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodations: Hotel Viminale

Day 4: Spectacle and Society

Today focuses on public entertainment and communal life. Your expert will discuss public religion as political policy and why The Games mattered. A morning visit to the Colosseum—including the hypogeum—reveals how games combined ritual, punishment, and imperial generosity into mass spectacle. Far from mere entertainment, these events reinforced social order and political loyalty. After lunch, explore the Baths of Caracalla, one of the empire’s greatest public complexes. Here, architecture, art, and daily routines show how Romans understood leisure, hygiene, and civic belonging as essential elements of a well-ordered society.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodations: Hotel Viminale

Day 5: Roads, Tombs, and the Reach of Empire

Travel along the Via Appia Antica, Rome’s famous ancient road, to experience infrastructure as an expression of imperial ambition. Nearby catacombs introduce early Christian burial practices and shifting beliefs about death and salvation. In the afternoon, visit Hadrian’s Villa at Tivoli, where architecture draws inspiration from across the empire. This retreat reflects a ruler’s intellectual curiosity and the cosmopolitan reach of Roman culture, blending philosophy, power, and artistic innovation into a landscape of ideas.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodations: Hotel Viminale





Day 6: Private Belief and Imperial Power

Begin on the Aventine Hill at Santa Sabina, an early Christian Basilica that incorporates classical columns and spatial traditions, signaling continuity amid cultural change. The symbolic keyhole view toward St. Peter's underscores Rome's enduring sacred geography. Later, descend beneath San Clemente (or San Prisca) to explore a Mithraic sanctuary. These intimate spaces reveal how private cults coexisted with official religion, offering insight into the complex religious marketplace of imperial Rome. Conclude with a festive farewell dinner sharing reflections with your expert and new friends.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodations: Hotel Viminale



Day 7: Departures

After breakfast, depart Rome independently, taking with you a deeper understanding of how belief, power, and daily life shaped the Eternal City in the age of empire—and how its legacy endures.

Included Meal: Breakfast

Accommodations



Hotel Viminale

Rome

Hotel Viminale is a stylish, modern boutique hotel housed in an historic late-19th-century building in central Rome. Its minimalist interiors and cozy rooms blend elegance with contemporary comfort, offering a serene retreat just steps from iconic landmarks. With refined design details and a prime Via Cesare Balbo location, it provides an ideal base for exploring the Eternal City. **(6 nights)**



Pricing:

| Departure: | Double Occupancy: | Single Occupancy: | Deposit: | |
|------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------|---------------------------------|
| March 13–19, 2027 | \$7,995 | \$9,535 | \$650 | <u>BOOK NOW</u> |
| November 27–December 3, 2027 | \$7,995 | \$9,535 | \$650 | <u>BOOK NOW</u> |

What's Included:

- All accommodations for the duration of the tour
- Meals, as noted in the itinerary
- All sightseeing and visits as noted in each itinerary
- Expertise of The Great Courses Expert, travel director and local guides throughout the tour
- All gratuities for on-tour guides, drivers, hotel and restaurant staff as part of the group program
- All on-tour transportation, unless otherwise noted
- Quietvox listening devices to facilitate audibility and social distancing on tour
- The assistance of an ATA professional travel team to assist with pre-trip questions, travel arrangements, including flights, extra hotel nights and other services
- Comprehensive pre-departure mailings and materials with information about the destination and what to expect on tour, including a suggested reading list
- Emergency evacuation insurance

[Click here to view terms and conditions online.](#)