

ROME

Italy



Top Side Trips in the hills

It's said that you can spend a lifetime visiting Rome... and we reckon you can spend your holiday exploring the hills behind Rome - where the climate is cooler and there's fewer tourists.

Sample our **TOP PICKS** for starters:

Nemi: Perched on the side of a volcanic crater, the small circular lake -known as Diana's Mirror - is located in the Alban Hills, 30km (19 mi) south of Rome. The Sanctuary of Diana houses remains from two ceremonial ships built for emperor Caligula. Known for the Strawberry Festival in May/June - the town looks especially pretty decorated for the event, but it's pleasant enough to visit any time and sample the tiny local 'wild' strawberries - the size of your little finger tip.

Palestrina The National Archaeological Museum offers panoramic views of the valley, the ruins of Fortuna's temple and a must see 2nd C mosaic depicting the Nile. 35km (22 mi) east of Rome **Valmontone** Head to the Palazzo Doria Pamphilj - our timing was just right - we enjoyed a tour of the fabulous large scale fresco's from 1646 with the town Mayoress Eleonora and

art historian Elisa - the recently resorted art is now open to the public and worth a trip of 45km (28 mi) southeast of Rome - where you can shop in the designer outlet mall too. **Castle Gandolfo** If it's good enough for Popes past and present to spend their summer months, you can pass an hour or two of your holiday at this pretty hilltop village overlooking Lake Albano. The Popes gardens have recently opened to the public - apply for your ticket well in advance. With a few boutique style shops and several restaurants just off the Piazza, pull up a chair to enjoy pasta with a papal view. 25km (16 mi) south of Rome. **Frascati** Locals believe it to be one of the most beautiful towns in Castelli Romani... it's wine labels are world famous. Cover history, valley views, villas and wines, plus a 12th C church - less than a 30 mins train ride from Rome. **Tivoli Gardens** Villa d'Este - a grand 16th C estate attracting visitors to it's famous gardens filled with hundreds of water fountains. A lot less grand than our visit 30 years ago - the villa has excellent fresco's and a opera themed costume exhibit. 31km (20 mi) east of Rome.

