



Chris Ward-Jones for The New York Times

When in Rome, shop as the Romans shop.

Sparse Crowds, Low Prices, Eternal City

In winter, visitors can see Rome in a different light.

BY BRIAN WINGFIELD 12

WHAT TO DO DURING THE DAY To fully appreciate Rome's history, visit the Capitoline Museums, Piazza del Campidoglio, 1, (39-06) 8205-9127, www.museicapitolini.org. It features the city's most important archaeological treasures and the best view of the Roman Forum. In December, a new wing opened, containing the original equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius, one of Rome's most enduring symbols. Open 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Closed Mondays. Admission 6.50 euros.

Every trip to Rome should include a trip to the Vatican, but now visitors can see the tomb of Pope John Paul II, a simple marble slab with a gold inscription bearing his Latin name and the dates of his reign. Nearly a year after his death, thousands still come daily. Follow the crowds to the north side of St. Peter's Basilica and descend the ramp into the grottoes. Free admission.

Epicureans and oenologists should visit the International Wine Academy of Roma, Vicolo del Bottino, 8, (39-06) 699-0878, www.wineacademyroma.com, near the Spanish Steps. For 150 euros a person, a half-day course (two people minimum) consists of five wine tastings and a four-course meal. Reservations should be made two weeks in advance.

Until March 5, the Chiostrro del Bramante, Via Arco della Pace 5, (39-06) 6880-9035, www.chiostrodell Bramante.it, features the exhibition "Zandomenoghi: A Venetian Among the Impressionists." The show is a superb collection of sketches and paintings by an Italian artist in 19th-century Paris who influenced the work of Toulouse-Lautrec. Open 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Closed Mondays. Admission 9 euros.

GOING TO Rome



The New York Times



TOP A flag flies on the monument to King Victor Emmanuel II on the Piazza Venezia. ABOVE LEFT Admiring a painting in the Galleria Borghese. ABOVE RIGHT Savoring a moment at the International Wine Academy.