



10 of the coolest neighbourhoods in Europe

▲ 'Where locals go to let off steam' ... the Järntorget and Långgatorna area of Gothenburg. Photograph: Marie Ullnert

Ostiense, Rome



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Centrale Montemartini, 'arguably Rome's most underrated museum'. Photograph: Alessandra Benedetti/Getty Images

The Ostiense neighbourhood, right on the Tiber river, was once the site of a power station, a restless river port and a gasometer, whose skeleton still looms. It's named after Via Ostiensis, an arterial road that ran in ancient times from the city's cattle market to the port town of Ostia. Today, Ostiense has shaken off its industrial past to become a bastion of new restaurants, street art and bars. A scattering of campuses mean

there's a big student population, but there's also an international crowd, drawn by reasonable rents and a metro link to the city centre. Come here to eat sumptuously and admire historic sites far from the masses.

See and do

One of the city's four major basilicas, [St Paul's Outside the Walls](#) on Piazzale San Paolo 1 enjoys a quiet stream of visitors, a far cry from its more famous counterpart, St Peter's. While it suffered a fire in the 19th century and underwent lengthy repairs, its ancient mosaics and 13th-century cloister were spared. The latter serves as a lovely spot to unwind after a day's sightseeing. Further down Via Ostiense lies [Centrale Montemartini](#), arguably Rome's most underrated museum. Originally an electricity plant, the space was abandoned until 2005 when it was chosen to house artwork from the overcrowded Capitoline Museums. Seek out its delightfully jarring juxtaposition of delicate classical statues and defunct diesel engines and turbines. Head north towards Trastevere and the city centre (keeping an eye out for vibrant street art) and have a look round the **Non-Catholic Cemetery**, the final resting place of Romantic poets and former Rome residents John Keats and Percy Bysshe Shelley (Via Caio Cestio 12). The ancient pyramid of [Caius Cestius](#), constructed in about 12BC, keeps a staid watch over the cemetery. Visitors are allowed inside the pyramid on a guided tour the third and fourth Saturday and Sunday of every month (entrance on Via Raffaele Persichetti).

Shops aren't Ostiense's forte, but cheese, olive oil, pasta, wine and other edible souvenirs can be purchased from gastronomic megastore [Eataly](#), on the south side of Ostiense train station. Beyond the basilica, zero-waste shop [Negozio Leggero](#) sells anything from beauty products to chocolate to spices, all packaging-free (Via Chiabrera 80).



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Porto Fluviale.

Food and drink

Locals and expats flock to restaurant and micro-bakery **Marigold** (Via Giovanni da Empoli 37), run by Sophie, who's from Denmark, and her Calabrese partner Domenico, for its cosy atmosphere and homely dishes. Instead of the traditional Italian breakfast of *caffè* and *cornetto* (croissant), they serve dishes like eggs benedict, pancakes or fluffy cheese omelettes. At lunch and dinner there will be handmade pasta and plenty of vegetable-lush dishes too.

Doted on by critics – it even made the Michelin Guide's coveted Bib Gourmand list this year – **Trattoria Pennestri** (Via Giovanni da Empoli 5) flirts with both traditional Roman and gourmet cuisine. Tuck into a glossy plate of carbonara, or mains such as roasted octopus with peppers, mint and yogurt; and suckling pig with porcini mushrooms and myrtle. There's no chance you'll wangle a table without booking.

Staunch titans of *cucina romana* such as tripe, *cacio e pepe*, and salt cod anchor the kitchen of **Osteria Fratelli Mori** near the cemetery (Via dei Conciatori 10). It's also one of the rare Rome restaurants that can easily accommodate a large group. Once the sun goes down, head to **Caffè Letterario** (Via Ostiense 95), a cafe, bookshop and cultural space that moonlights as a cocktail bar. In hot weather, sip a glass of red on the terrace at **T-Bar** (Via Ostiense 182) or in the Instagrammable courtyard of **Porto Fluviale** (Via del Porto Fluviale 22). For late-night munchies, chocolate-chip-studded sweet buns from **Il Pangocciolaio** (Via dei Magazzini Generali 15) hit the spot.

Where to stay

Gasometer Urban Suites (studio with kitchenette from €86) is a former wool processing plant turned hotel with a gym and roof terrace.
Alexandra Bruzzese