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VISIT GUIDE 2026

Galerie Borghèse

Rome · From 83€

<https://galleriaborghese.visit-tickets.com/en/> · Skip the line tickets & rates



History & experience

ORIGIN & HISTORY

From Papal Palace to National Treasure

GOOGLE **4.6** ★★★★★ 30 510 reviews

TIQETS **4.7** ★★★★★ 3 869 reviews

The origins of the Galleria Borghese trace back to the late 16th century, when the wealthy **Borghese family** from Siena acquired lands north of Rome. Their influence surged in 1605 with the election of Cardinal Camillo Borghese as Pope Paul V. This papal authority allowed his nephew, Cardinal Scipione Borghese, to assemble a dizzying private collection that would define Italian art history.

Construction began in 1607 under architect Flaminio Ponzio, who designed a villa inspired by the Villa Medici and Villa Farnesina. The structure features a portico opening directly onto the gardens, creating a fluid transition between architecture and nature. Giovanni Vasanzio completed the works after Ponzio's death in 1613, while Carlo Rainaldi continued the garden arrangements until 1620. The facade is adorned with 144 bas-reliefs and 70 busts, testifying to an architectural ambition that blended classical rigor with Baroque grandeur.

Inside, the building was pierced with numerous windows specifically designed to illuminate the artworks. Lodovico Cigoli created frescoes such as the Story of Psyche, adding narrative layers to the spaces. By 1770, Marcantonio IV Borghese commissioned Antonio Asprucci for a complete interior renovation, introducing polychrome marble decorations and family histories painted on the walls. These enhancements preserved the villa's status as a cultural jewel for centuries.

In 1902, the Italian State purchased the villa and its collections to transform it into a public museum. Closed in 1983, the gallery underwent a monumental restoration over fourteen years. This colossal project restored the exterior to its original appearance, including the plasterwork and the double-ramp entrance staircase. Reopened in June 1997, the museum now welcomes over half a million visitors annually, maintaining its reputation as one of Rome's most intimate and powerful artistic destinations.

THE EXPERIENCE

Stepping through the doors of the Galleria Borghese feels like entering a carefully curated dream where light and stone dance together. The architecture is not merely a container but an active participant in the experience, with windows positioned to cast natural illumination across every marble surface. You immediately sense the calm intensity of the space, far removed from the crowded chaos of larger museums. The air is still, allowing your eyes to adjust to the subtle play of shadows that brings each sculpture to life.

As you move through the rooms, the proximity to the works creates a profound connection. You are not observing art from a distance; you are standing within it. The silence is broken only by the soft footsteps of other visitors, encouraging a deep immersion in the details. Every turn reveals a new masterpiece, whether it is the dynamic tension of Bernini or the dramatic chiaroscuro of Caravaggio. The promise of this visit is simple: two hours of pure aesthetic pleasure, where time slows down and beauty takes center stage.



PREPARE YOUR VISIT

Practical information

ADDRESS

Pinciano Quarter · Metro: Bologna (L3) 10 min walk, or bus 68/80 Pincio stop.

OPENING HOURS

Open Tuesday to Sunday, closed Monday. Hours may vary by season and public holidays.

FARES

Free child entry depending on age (check the variants). {promo}.

VISIT DURATION

Allow 2 hours for a complete visit. The ticket is valid for this specific time slot; although you are not forced out at exactly the hour, it is advisable to man

PHOTOS

Flash-free photography is allowed in most rooms. Check specific signs for temporary exhibitions or fragile works where flash is strictly prohibited to preserve

AUDIENCE

Ideal for couples and art lovers. The atmosphere there is calmer and more compact than in the large Vatican museums, allowing deep immersion in Italian Baroque

HOW TO GET THERE

Access & transport

**Metro**

: Saba Parcheggio Villa Borghese — 8 min à pied

Rome Termini Station (10 min) · Leonardo da Vinci Rome Fiumicino Airport (62 min)

**Bus**

: Po/Simeto — 7 min à pied

Rome Termini Station (15 min) · Leonardo da Vinci Rome Fiumicino Airport (102 min)

**Car**

Rome Termini Station (8 min) · Leonardo da Vinci Rome Fiumicino Airport (81 min)

**Bike**

Rome Termini Station (10 min) · Leonardo da Vinci Rome Fiumicino Airport (110 min)

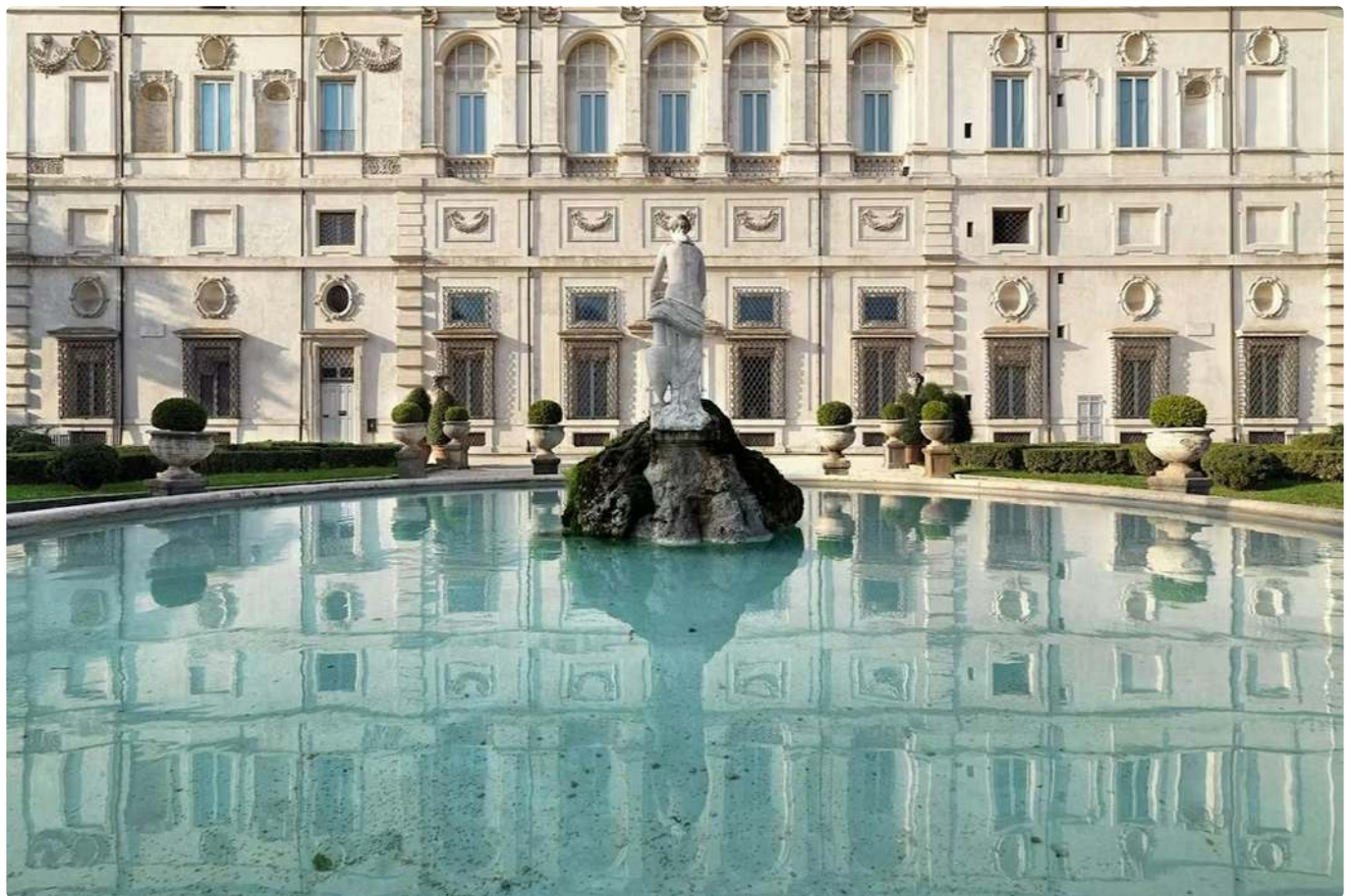
LOCALISATION

Où se trouve Galerie Borghèse ?



 Piazzale Scipione Borghese, 5 — 00197 Rome

 41°54.853' N, 12°29.529' E



ORGANIZATION

Navigating the Two-Level Layout

Ground Floor (Main Gallery)

This level houses the majority of the museum's iconic sculptures and paintings. Key works include Bernini's Apollo and Daphne and David, as well as Caravaggio's Judith Beheading Holofernes. The layout allows for a continuous flow, guiding visitors past masterpieces without feeling rushed. Natural light from the large windows enhances the visual impact of these pieces.

Upper Floor (Paintings & Frescoes)

The upper level focuses on the painting collection, featuring works by Raphael, Titian, and Rubens. Here, you will find the Lamentation by Rubens and the Deposition from the Cross by Raphael. The rooms are decorated with frescoes and stucco work added during the 18th-century renovations. This floor offers a quieter, more contemplative environment compared to the bustling ground floor.

Gardens & Portico

While not strictly indoors, the portico and adjacent gardens are integral to the experience. The portico, designed by Flaminio Ponzio, opens directly onto the lush greenery of Villa Borghese. Visitors can enjoy the view of the Pincian Hill from this vantage point. It provides a peaceful space to reflect on the artworks seen inside before heading out.

ACCESSIBILITY



Disabled Access

Facilitated access by elevators, check specific conditions for historical staircases.



Families

Visit possible but demanding in terms of duration, plan breaks in the adjacent gardens.



Audio guide

French, English, Spanish, German, Italian



Must-sees

SELECTION

Masterpieces That Define Baroque Rome

01 GIAN LORENZO BERNINI Ground Floor

Apollo and Daphne

This sculpture captures the mythological moment when Daphne transforms into a laurel tree to escape Apollo. Bernini uses white marble to depict hair, leaves, and skin with astonishing realism. The figures are intertwined in a dynamic composition that freezes motion in stone. Observe the delicate details of Daphne's fingers turning into branches.

💡 Bernini carved this piece in just **eight months**, demonstrating his extraordinary speed and technical mastery.

02 GIAN LORENZO BERNINI Ground Floor

David

Unlike Michelangelo's static David, Bernini's version shows the hero in the midst of action, having just thrown the stone at Goliath. The figure twists dynamically, with muscles tensed and eyes focused on the enemy. The sculpture conveys a sense of imminent violence and triumph. It is a prime example of Baroque theatricality in sculpture.

💡 The statue was originally intended for the **Borghese chapel** but was moved to the villa due to space constraints.

03 CARAVAGGIO Ground Floor

Judith Beheading Holofernes

This painting depicts the biblical scene with intense realism and dramatic lighting. Judith, aided by her maidservant, beheads the Assyrian general Holofernes. The use of chiaroscuro creates a stark contrast between light and shadow, highlighting the emotional intensity of the moment. The blood spilling from the neck is rendered with visceral detail.

💡 Caravaggio painted this work in **1602**, showcasing his early mastery of dramatic composition.

04 GIAN LORENZO BERNINI Ground Floor

The Rape of Proserpina

This sculpture illustrates the myth of Pluto abducting Proserpina from the earth. Proserpina's scream of horror is captured in marble, with her body twisting in resistance. Pluto's muscular form contrasts with her delicate features. The horse rearing in the background adds to the chaotic energy of the scene.



Bernini used different types of marble to distinguish the characters, enhancing the **narrative depth**.

05

PETER PAUL RUBENS Upper Floor

Lamentation

This oil painting depicts the mourning of Christ's body after the crucifixion. Rubens employs a vibrant color palette and dynamic composition to convey grief. The figures are arranged in a pyramidal structure, drawing the eye to the central image of Christ. The brushwork is loose yet expressive, typical of Rubens' style.



Rubens painted this work in **Antwerp** before moving to Italy, reflecting his Flemish influences.

06

RAPHAEL Upper Floor

Deposition from the Cross

Raphael's painting shows the lowering of Christ's body from the cross. The composition is balanced and harmonious, with figures arranged in a gentle curve. The colors are muted, emphasizing the solemnity of the event. The faces of the mourners express deep sorrow and compassion.



This work was part of a series commissioned for the **Borgo Palace** before being transferred to the villa.

07

ANTONIO CANOVA Ground Floor

Venus Victrix

Canova's neoclassical sculpture depicts Venus standing in victory, holding a shield and spear. The figure embodies idealized beauty and grace, with smooth surfaces and elegant proportions. Unlike the Baroque dynamism of Bernini, Canova's work emphasizes calmness and perfection. It represents the shift towards Neoclassicism in the late 18th century.



Canova was invited to the Borghese collection to showcase the **new classical style** emerging in Europe.

08

GIAN LORENZO BERNINI Ground Floor

Psyche Revived by Cupid's Kiss

This small but powerful sculpture shows Cupid reviving Psyche with a kiss. The figures are tenderly intertwined, with Cupid leaning over the unconscious Psyche. The marble is polished to a high sheen, highlighting the softness of their forms. It captures a moment of intimacy and divine intervention.



Bernini carved this piece for the **garden pavilion**, where it was meant to be viewed in natural light.

TIPS

Essential Tips for a Perfect Visit

TIMING

Book the earliest morning slots (from 8:30 AM) to avoid crowds and enjoy the museum in peace. Arrive 15 minutes before your departure time to ensure you have enough time for the full 2-hour visit.

BILLET

Always prioritize advance booking, especially for guided tours. Skip-the-line tickets guarantee entry without queues, unlike standard tickets which may involve variable waiting times. Check the official website for current pricing and availability.

PARCOURS

Start with the sculptures on the ground floor, then move to the paintings on the upper level. If you are in a hurry, focus on the Bernini works first, as they are the highlights of the collection. Allow extra time for the Lamentation by Rubens if you are interested in painting.

PHOTO

Flash-free photography is allowed in most rooms, but check specific signs for temporary exhibitions. Use a discreet mode so as not to disturb other visitors. The best photos are taken in natural light, particularly near the large windows.

PAUSE

Take a break in the Villa Borghese Gardens before or after your museum slot. The park is vast and free, offering a perfect contrast to the artistic intensity inside. There are several cafes and restaurants nearby, including Trattoria Da Enzo al 29.

ENFANTS

The visit is possible but demanding in terms of duration. Plan breaks in the adjacent gardens to keep children engaged. Consider the Small-group guided tour option, which is tailored for families and includes clear audio guides.

AUDIOGUIDE

The audioguide is available in French, English, Spanish, German, and Italian. It is highly recommended for understanding the historical context related to Pope Paul V and Cardinal Scipione Borghese. Prioritize listening to the explanations for the Bernini sculptures and Caravaggio paintings.

CONFORT

Wear comfortable shoes, as you will be walking for several hours. Leave large bags, suitcases, and closed umbrellas at the cloakroom available at the entrance. Only small handbags and compact cameras are allowed inside.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

FAQ

Is it possible to visit the Borghese Gallery without a reservation?

No, a reservation is mandatory to access the museum. The system operates with strict time slots that regulate visitor flow. It is therefore impossible to buy a ticket on site without having reserved a specific slot in ad

What is the best time slot to avoid crowds?

The earliest morning slots (from 8:30 AM) are generally the quietest. The last slots of the day can also be interesting if you want to enjoy the evening light. Avoid peak times such as midday on weekdays.

How far in advance should I book?

It is recommended to book at least 1 to 2 weeks in advance, especially in summer or during school holidays. Slots go very quickly, particularly for guided tours in French. A few days' notice is sometimes enough in low se

Can I cancel or modify my reservation?

Conditions vary depending on the type of ticket. Standard skip-the-line tickets are often non-refundable but modifiable up to 24h before. Guided tours have stricter policies. Always check the free cancellation conditions

How long does a complete gallery visit take?

The ticket covers a 2-hour time slot. This duration is sufficient to see the essentials of the collections. There is no physical expulsion at the end of the slot, but it is strongly advised to respect this timing to let

DID YOU KNOW?

Anecdotes & curiosities

The Collector Pope

In 1605, the election of Camillo Borghese as Pope Paul V triggered a frenzy of acquisitions. His nephew Scipione used this direct influence to assemble a dizzying private collection. The pope even confiscated works from the atelier of the Cavalier d'Arpin to gift to his nephew. This patronage helped establish the Borghese collection as one of the finest in Italy.

Luminous Architecture

The building is pierced with numerous windows specifically designed to illuminate the works of art. The facade is adorned with 144 bas-reliefs and 70 busts, testifying to an architectural ambition that blends classical rigor with Baroque grandeur. The distribution of rooms is agencé in a similar purpose, ensuring optimal viewing conditions for each piece.

Monumental Restoration

Closed in 1983, the gallery underwent a complete restoration over fourteen years. This colossal project restored the exterior to its original appearance, notably the plasterwork and the double-ramp entrance staircase. The reopening in June 1997 marked a new era for the museum, preserving its historical integrity while modernizing visitor facilities.

Aldobrandini Heritage

After 1682, the Aldobrandini collection brought a major enrichment to the museum's holdings. This legacy completed the Borghese acquisitions, creating a coherent ensemble that mixes Baroque and Classical styles. The collection included works from Olimpia Aldobrandini, wife of Paul Borghese, further diversifying the artistic repertoire of the villa.

AROUND THE MUSEUM

The museum is nestled within the vast **Villa Borghese Gardens**, offering a perfect contrast to the artistic intensity inside. Before or after your strict museum slot, take a soothing walk along the shaded paths, which provide a welcome respite from the indoor atmosphere. Just outside the park lies **Piazza del Popolo**, an emblematic square with twin churches that serves as a great starting point for exploring the historic center. For a unique cultural twist, visit the nearby Galileo Galilei Museum located in the Oratory church. After your visit, satisfy your hunger at **Trattoria Da Enzo al 29**, famous for its authentic Roman cuisine and often favored by tourists seeking local flavors. The area is compact and accessible, making it easy to combine multiple experiences in a single day.



Leaving the Galleria Borghese, you carry with you more than just memories; you hold a fragment of Roman Baroque spirit. The experience is uniquely personal, shaped by the quiet moments spent gazing at **living marble**. It is a reminder that art can still move us profoundly in our modern world. Return whenever you need to reconnect with the **timeless power** of creation.