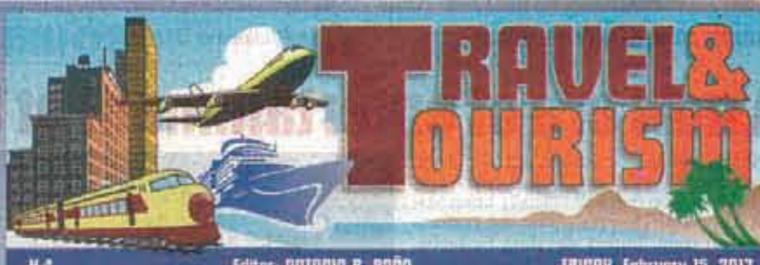


SIX WEEKS IN ROME

By MANNY GONZALEZ
Plantation Bay Resort & Spa

Part 3 of 4: How to Do Rome in a Day (Continued)

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H-4 Editor: ANTONIO R. PAÑO FRIDAY, February 15, 2013

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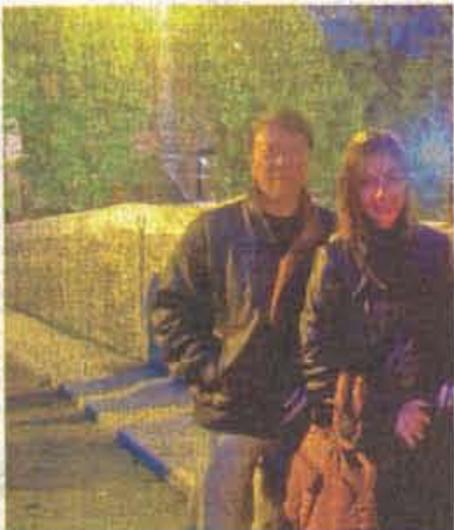
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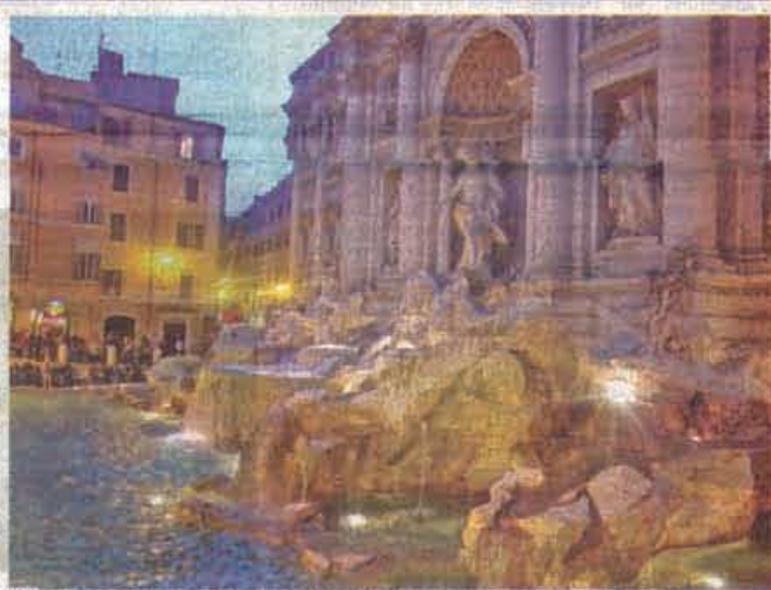
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Turn to H-3

You can now see St. Peter's from a kilometer away. Approaching it was more fun before. Read article to learn why.



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From H-4

head on to St. Peter's as it is now getting dark. (The taxi ride will cost you less than 10 euros.) Note that by now the Vatican museums are closed and you will never, ever see the Sistine Chapel, at least not today. Not to worry. Here are some useful comments to convince people that you were actually inside the Vatican:

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Now look backward. That long, wide avenue you just took is called via della Conciliazione, which dates only from 1936. Here, Mussolini did not do so good. For its first 400 years of existence, there was no clear path leading to St. Peter's. Coming from anywhere else in Rome, there were just lots of narrow lanes like cobwebs. Pilgrims had to navigate the maze of sunless streets, frequently asking for directions. Then, just when they thought they were hopelessly lost, they would turn a corner and, magically, seemingly from nowhere, the vast expanse and awesome majesty of St. Peter's Square would reveal itself. It must have felt like you had just gotten to paradise. Now, you can see the front of St. Peter's from one kilometer away, and there is no more thrill of discovery.

Anyway, enter St. Peter's. At this time of day, there will be no waiting line. There is lots to see inside, including a brass canopy by Bernini over the main altar, Michaelangelo's Pieta, and much else.

#13 Dinner in Trastevere. Exiting St. Peter's, again get a cab. Tell the driver "Santa Maria in Trastevere." That's pronounced truss-TEH-veh-reh, and it means "across the Tiber," which used to be a pretty wild area, along with the Vatican. If you practice pronouncing the word correctly, the driver will be amazed at your Italian, and whisk you in about five breathtaking minutes to your destination, a picturesque plaza with a church and lots of restaurants facing it. The church is about 1,600 years old, and though not very much ever happened in this area, it is a good place to walk around what feels like a movie set, see yet more tourists, and have dinner.

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