

## Altemps Palace

The pleasure of a **luxury vacation** is also given by the services offered, since they make it unique and unforgettable. At **Grand Hotel Plaza- Rome**, we offer a wide selection of **all-inclusive packages**, which make Rome the preferred destination of your holidays. If you love art and wish to live the city by discovering its rare beauties, you won't miss the chance to go on a special tour, especially planned for you.

**Palazzo Altemps**, less than one kilometer away from our **Grand Hotel Plaza**, is one of these rare beauties. This noble palace hosts the **Museo Nazionale Romano**, dedicated to the history of collectionism and which now collects **masterpieces** from ancient **private collections** belonged to prestigious noble Italian families.

Built during the **XV century** by Girolamo Riario, wealthy and powerful cousin to Pope Sisto IV, it was bought by **Marco Sittico Hoemems**, in 1568. Hoemems, then Italianized into Altemps, was nephew to Pope Pio IV, influent cardinal of Austrian origins; he transformed the "palace into a real realm"

A visit to the palace will give you the idea of the passion the Cardinal Altemps had for antiquities. The internal **courtyard**, a scenographic place used for parties and theatre performances, is embellished by a beautiful fountain decorated with mosaics and skillfully decorated with shells and colored stones, recalling the Roman water lilies. The fountain is completed by an arch beneath which is a steinbock, symbol of the Altemps Family **coat of arms**.

This extraordinary **guided tour** will take you to the first floor, where large frescoed rooms facing the Loggia can be admired. These rooms are a masterpiece by Antonio Viviani, who wanted to re-create a sort of enchanted garden, with different blooming plants as to create a **perspective architecture**.

The painted pergola is animated by birds, different animals and fruits, like the pineapple, imported from the New World thanks to new geographic discoveries. On the sides, the paintings of the Virtue and the Fame together with the coat of arms of the **Orsini and Altemps Families**.

Once again, a quote from the past, a reminder of the taste of the Roman painting for the representation of the *paradeisos*, the Heaven, the garden of Eden

Passing from one room into another, you will admire the statue of the "**Dace Mattei**", with its yellow bracciato marble vests, a prestigious material coming from Tunisia, used to decorate the Emilia Basilica inside the Foro Romano. This work is a fine copy of Fidia **Athena Parthenos** on which it is still possible to read the name of the Greek author.

On display on the first floor, the ancient sculptures of the Egyptian harvest, coming from the Temple of Iside and Serapide inside Campo Marzio, like the **Sfinge** in black granite and the statue of **Iside** with a sacred snake, sikes and poppies decorating the tiara. You can also admire the "**Torello Brancaccio**", a representation of the bull-god Apis, holding the solar disk and the uraeus. This sculpture was brought from Egypt in the II Century b.C and was used to decorate the Horti Mæcenatiani, on the Esquiline Hill.

On display in the **Ludovisi Ares room**, where in the year '400 the notables were used to get entertained, are the works of art from the Boncompagni Ludovisi's collection.

The **Ludovisi Ares** is an undiscussed masterpiece of the ancient times, that came to light in Rome between 1621-1622 and which was restaured by the **Master Gian Lorenzo Bernini**

This sensational sculpture of Ares/Mars portrays a young and beardless man seated on a trophy of arms, while an Eros plays about his feet, drawing attention to the fact that the god of war, in a moment of repose, is presented as a love object.

The same room also displays the sculptural group defined by an admired Winkelmann: “**Elettra in colloquio con Oreste fratel suo**”.

The two brothers are depicted in the act of comforting each other, after the haircut as sign of mourning, on the tomb of the father Agamennone. The masterpiece was created by **Menelaos**, as indicated on a stele positioned between the statues. This artist was active during the age of Cesare.

Your tour will proceed inside the room of the **Ludovisi Throne**, a masterpiece from the Magna Grecia, discovered in Rome in 1887 during the excavation works for the urbanization of Villa Ludovisi.

You will also witness the birth of Afrodite from the sea foam. The same sea in which the genitals of Urano had been thrown after he had been evirated by Kronos, as narrated in Omero’s Hymn dedicated to the Goddess.

The divine origin is hidden by a veil, may be originally painted as a starry sky, held by two young girls, the **Horai**, who are bare feet on the beach on the Island of Cipro and who also sustain the goddess body.

Afrodite shows a refined hairdo and wears a very thin chiton that, wetted by the sea, discovers the female forms.

At the sides of the work there are two reliefs depicting a female figure, represented in profile and elegantly laying on a folded pillow: a naked flute player and a young bride, wearing a coat, in the act of spreading incense grains on a brazier. Representations of priestesses while making rituals in honor of the Goddess.

The **Testa colossale di Afrodite** is another masterpiece of the Magna Grecia worth to be noted. The sculpture was found in 1733 in the surroundings of Villa Ludovisi. As for the Throne, the Head too was taken to Rome, probably from Locri Epizefiri, city conquered by Scipio the African, in 205 b.C and was re-utilized inside the Sanctuary of Venere Erycina, built between the 184 and the 181 on the Quirinale.

Again, from the Ludovisi Collection, the head of **Iuno** recognized by Winkelmann as a cornerstone of ancient history, admired by Goethe, who defined it: “my adored Juno” and had a copy done for his apartment situated in Via del Corso.

Passing through the Duchess Room, Isabella Lante Altemps private rooms, you will admire the beautiful frescoes **Rape of Europa, the Awakening of Aurora and Galatea**, the statues of the **Crouching Venus, Aphrodite, Eros and the Dolphin** and **Cupid and Psyche**.

After passing through the Cardinal room and his studio on the Painted Loggia, you access the **Sala grande del Galata**, a sumptuous ceremonial hall where a fireplace made of precious colored marbles and finely decorated shows off. On top of it there is a bust of Cardinal Marco Sittico watching the guests.

At the center of the hall the Ludovisi Gaul Killing Himself and His Wife, undiscussed works of art belonging to the Ludovisi Collection.

The marble group depicts a man in the act of plunging a sword into his breast, looking backwards defiantly while he supports the dying figure of a woman with his left arm. The sculpture group was possibly found in the grounds of the Villa Ludovisi.

You will end this not to be missed tour with a visit to the **Church of the Palace, consecrated to the Beata Maria Vergine della Clemenza** and dedicated to **Sant’ Aniceto**, one of the first popes and martyrs, sentenced to beheading and whose body was here transported in 1617. The life of the Saint, his martyrdom and the unfair death sentence are depicted on the cycle of frescoes which decorate the nave and recall the sad life and death of Roberto Altemps, the cardinal Marco Sittico’s illegitimate son.

The young, accused of adultery, sentenced to beheading by Pope Sisto V in 1586, despite the pleas of the father and the young pregnant wife.

You will be amazed and fascinated by the works of art you will have the chance to see thanks to this tour.

This is only one of the lovely proposals the **Grand Hotel Plaza in Rome** has planned for you. **Do not hesitate to contact us** and ask for more information and discover what offers we have reserved to you in order to make your stay in the Capital at the height of your expectations.