

Eating

Rome is a great place to **eat**: its denizens know a good deal about freshness and authenticity, and can be very demanding when it comes to the quality of the dishes they are served. Consequently, eating out is a major, often hours-long, activity, and the meals you'll enjoy generally range from good to truly remarkable. You'll find that most city-centre **restaurants** offer standard Italian dishes, although a few more adventurous restaurants have been popping up of late. At the geographical centre of the country, Italy's capital also has numerous establishments dedicated to a variety of regional cuisines, and a reasonable number of excellent ethnic restaurants. Rome is blessed with an abundance of good, honest **pizzerias** as well, churning out thin, crispy-baked pizza from wood-fired ovens. We've also listed a range of places serving **snacks** and, at the end of the section, the best of the city's **gelaterie** and **pasticcerie**. One final caveat: although generally speaking it's hard to find truly bad food and rip-off prices in Rome, it may be wise to avoid places that are adjacent to some major monuments, such as the Pantheon, Piazza Navona or the Vatican.

Lunch, snacks and self-service

Rome has plenty of places in which to refuel during a long day's sightseeing, and they don't all cater for tourists. Most bars sell panini and *tramezzini*, and there are plenty of stand-up *rosticcerie*, but the following are some of our favourite places for a good-quality, unpretentious **lunch or snack**, or just a sustaining cup of coffee.

Across the river: Trastevere and the Vatican

Asinocotto Via Vascellari 48 ☎06.589.8985, @www.asinocotto.it. A fabulous restaurant, one of the few really fine gourmet establishments in Rome serving up inventive cuisine such as zucchini flowers stuffed with green ricotta, fettucini in a sauce of red lettuce, or chocolate mousse with celery syrup. The wine list stretches to 65 pages. It's rather pricey (€45 not including wine) but worth it. Booking advised.