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Dedication: Liz my late dearly loved wife who loved this city

Welcome to Rome

A stay in Rome brings the visitor into close touch with the early Christian world.

It was here shortly after the resurrection and ascension of Jesus that the early Christians began to establish a number of small congregations. It was here also that Peter and Paul, the two great apostles and leaders of the Christian church, lived for a time and died as martyrs in the persecution.

Rome wasn't built in a day, and it would be possible to spend months, indeed years, visiting and appreciating the many Christian sites, buildings, art and architecture. This travel guide is therefore inevitably selective, and the sites that it covers are particularly intended to give some detailed insights into early Christian worship and society. It will also make us aware of the intense persecution suffered by the early church in the years before the Emperor Constantine embraced the Christian faith in AD 312.

In the years following Constantine's conversion, Christianity became the established religion of the whole Roman Empire and enjoyed the patronage of the wealthy who built splendid, gracious buildings and became patrons of the arts and architecture. This travel guide will also take us to some of the most important of these places including St John Lateran, St Peter's Basilica, the Vatican Museums and the Villa Borghese and Park. This Renaissance cultural experience can be further enhanced by eating out in some of the gracious squares such as the Piazza Navona, Piazza di Spagna with its famous Spanish steps and the Piazza di Trevi with its magnificent fountains. Welcome to the Eternal City.

