

Catacombs of St. Sebastiano

The Catacombs of St. Sebastiano have been the first to be indicated with the Greek expression *katà kymbas*" (by the cave), hence the name used to design all the underground cemeteries. Inside these Catacombs, disposed over four levels, was buried St. Sebastiano, victim of Diocletians persecutions; in the crypt of the Saint you can admire a bust ascribed to Bernini.

They have been, for a long time, the only catacombs to be visited, together with St. Lorenzo and St. Pancrazio; in 1st century, in this area, there was a pagan cemetery which was transformed into a Christian one during 3rd cent., after the conversion of the lands owner, who started the first excavation works.

In 258 DC, during persecutions by Valeriano, St. Peters and St. Pauls relics were secretly moved here from their tombs in Vatican and Via Ostiense, where they were later brought back.: only during periods of strong persecutions the gallery were secretly dug under the estates of rich Christians (just like the Catacombs of Pretestato, with crypts and cubicula decorated with paintings from 2nd century. Via Appia Pignatelli, 11).

Tel: +39 06 7850350

Bus: 118, 218

Open: Monday - Saturday h9.00 - h12.00, h14.00 - h17.00

Closed: Sunday,; from 22 nov - 20 de

Church of St. Sebastiano

The Basilica of St. Sebastiano was first dedicated to SS. Apostles Peter and Paul, St. Sebastiano being buried there only in 3rd cent.: he was a servant of the Imperial Family and was condemned to be pierced to death by arrows, during Diocletian's persecutions.

The Basilica was built in the first half of 4th cent. and re-built by Ponzio and Vesanzio in 1609; the façade is from 1612 and it was ordered by Cardinal Scipione Borghese; on the inside a ligneous ceiling by Vesanzio and in the first chapel on the left, on the tomb of St. Sebastiano, you can admire the Saints statue by Giorgetti upon model by Bernini.

The first chapel on the right holds on the inside the stone of the footprints left by Jesus when he met St. Peter on the Appian Way, where now the Church Domine Quo Vadis? stands. Actually it is just an ex voto for the success of a journey. In front of the Basilica a large square with the votive column of Pio IX, dating back to 1852.

In the nearby there is the entrance to the Jewish Catacombs in the Vigna Rondanini, a cemetery of the Jewish community during the Republic Era, used during 2nd and 4th cent. (Via Appia Pignatelli, 4. Information and reservations: Tel. +39 0668806897).

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Open: Monday - Sunday h8.00 - h13.00, h14.00 - h17.00