

21st Century Rome

In her article "**There's No Place Like Rome**", *Town & Country*, April 2008, Mimi Murphy recounts the transition of Rome during the past twenty-five years she has lived there. She took the new glass and steel elevator to the Quadriga Terrace on the tallest point of the Vittorio Emanuele II monument. She writes: "But from this vantage point, I could place in the distance the trendy neighborhoods that are pulling people from the ancient areas." "Eight years on, the city is finally reaping the reward of investments put in place for the new millennium and the Great Jubilee year at the Vatican.... With savvy urban planning, the city launched art and music centers to the north and south, and new museums to the east and west.... (former mayor) Veltroni sprinkled case (houses) focused on art, architecture and history around the city. My personal favorite is the *Casa del Jazz*, near the ancient Baths of Caracalla" "And Renzo Piano's Auditorium *Parco della Musica* is the most-visited performing-arts center in all of Europe " Fashion designers, writers, art dealers are spending more time in Rome. Mimi quotes Georgia Spogli wife of the U.S. Ambassador: "People used to go to Paris; now they come to Rome - not only for ancient art but for contemporary art." An eternally exciting city!

RomaEstate (Summer Rome) is in full swing from June 14 to August 19, chock full of sporting, theatrical and musical events. Click www.romaturismo.com for details.

Yummy things to do in Florence! Enjoy a delicious *gelato*, the cool thing to do while sightseeing or shopping. This e-mail is from two magazine editors who recently visited Florence "Hey there. Here are two gelato places we tried. **Perche No? (why not?)** (on via dei Tavolini)and **Gelateria Vivoli**, (via Isole delle Stinche, 7r.) They are famous for *semifreddo*. We had this insane chocolate mousse frozen thing. So good." Both are near the Duomo. Then, there is the exhibition "Fallari and Naturalism in Tuscany" at the Villa Bardini. Fallari was an important painter of the Macchiaoli (Tuscan) school, 1850-1880's, forerunners of the impressionists who painted outdoors: lovely country scenes, woods and hills, with local people, until Jun 22.....In Spring and Summer THE place to stay is at Bettoja's Relais Certosa Hotel nestled in the Tuscan hills just 15 minutes by hotel mini-bus from the center of the city. Lovely gardens, beautiful views of the 14th century monastery on the hillside., plenty of parking places and easy entrance to the main north to south highway. Even better, in the warmer weather, the swimming pool invites you to take a cooling dip, preceded, maybe, by a set or two of tennis on their two courts, lit at night. The lobby, entry way and environs have been redecorated, adding to the charm. Check www.bettojahotels.it for more.

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