

## Rome is More: the Capital on Show in NYC

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The Italy-America Chamber of Commerce in New York was transformed into an important showcase to present Rome, and more in general Lazio, as a land with wide-ranging offerings that go from the cultural to religious tourism, tourism for congresses and conferences, for wines and gastronomy and fashion.

There is no place like Rome. It is a city with roots in nearly three thousand years of history that is focused on the future. The Rome of today offers exceptional tourism experiences, thanks in part to its high quality hospitality services.

On the morning of December 8, at the Italy-America Chamber of Commerce, a workshop, open to buyers and operators in the tourism sector, was held to discuss the touristic offerings of Rome and, more in general, Lazio, as a land with wide-ranging offerings that go from cultural to religious tourism, tourism for congresses and conferences, for wines and gastronomy and fashion.



The name of the campaign promoting the city is Rome is More and it has been organized by the Italy-America Chamber of Commerce with the participation of the Rome Chamber of Commerce. At the presentation there were Consul Caterina Cittadino, Department Head of the Department for Development and Competitiveness in Tourism, Giancarlo Cremonesi, President of the Rome Chamber of Commerce, Gianluca De Gaetano, Deputy Director of the Rome Hotel Association, Federalberghi Roma, and Miss Mencarelli of Federlaberghi. Among the guests there was also the Director of ENIT, Riccardo Strano, who confirmed that Rome is the number one city attracting tourists from all over the world.

"We are celebrating Rome not just as the capital of Italy, but as the capital of culture in the world," Consul Cittadino said, "it's a city that talks to us of history, beauty, art. But also of excellence in the crafts, food and wine, fashion, audiovisual production and avant-garde cultural infrastructures."

Giancarlo Cremonesi, President of the Rome Chamber of Commerce, added, "Today Rome offers tourists an ample sampling of options, along with our ancient ruins and our architectural heritage that is known throughout the world, are modern cultural infrastructures like the Music Park Auditorium designed by Renzo Piano, which hosts each year the Rome International Film Festival and the Rome Fiction Fest and the Maxxi, Zaha Hadid's work, that now holds the National Museum of XXI Century Art."

As per Consul Pellegrino despite the economic crisis the tourism sector is in continuous growth especially in the so called Art Capitals: Rome, Venice and Florence, where 35% of all tourists go. 60% of the tourists visiting these three cities are foreigners. The Italian government is focusing on tourism as an important resource that can help economy a great deal. "In the past each region was in charge of its tourism, now everything is in the hands of a ministry focused on the coordination and promotion of the sector," she explained. "Growth is not something that happens overnight but the result of a focused campaign."

Despite the great numbers (+18% in the last two years) there is room for improvement and work on having tourists stay longer than the average two and a half days. "In order to do that," Consul Pellegrino said, "we have to offer something more than the usual artistic destinations... we call this the Second Touristic Hub project... there are parks, sports facilities, the beach, other museums. There is a lot to do and a quality of life that is simply unparalleled."

Apparently the biggest fans of the Italian lifestyle are Americans as per Mr. De Gaetano who said that "Americans are the highest number of visiting tourists. They prefer to stay in 4 star hotels and they have very specific demands that all hotels are able to meet. They require 16-24hr reception service, fitness centers, internet access and fire regulations. All new structures are built following specific needs, while old structures are being revamped in order to be competitive. These efforts to prevail have some great results: for example, more and more hotels are opening their restaurants to the public. These places are decorated in trendy styles, all the cool people go there and famous chefs are hired to design unique menus."

Despite the crisis Roman hotel owners keep investing in order to be up to standards and be in competition with the rest of Europe. Although many already think that there is no competition with Rome, one of the most loved cities in the world.

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