

Another art filled day!

Today was an art filled non-stop walkathon! Since tomorrow is my last full day, there were several art galleries that I wanted to visit so I started early at the Vatican museum. The Pope was saying mass in the open square today so I thought this would be a good time to visit the Museum. I was almost taken in by the “official” Vatican guides selling €33 tickets for entrance but noticed that they had spelled Vatican wrong on their fake badges. I waited in a line of maybe 100 people with a really nice young couple from England, Emma and Matthew, and we chatted about Rome and they, too, had just come from Venice. They had many similar comments as to the bizarre standing-behind-your-iPad-taking-photos-all-the-time fetish that grips tourists in groups. And yes, I need a catchier phrase!

While in line we saw a car hit a pole, a motorcycle skid to the ground, and two cars in a minor collision. Driving in Rome is crazy!

After we waited maybe five minutes to get in, I said goodbye to Emma and Matthew, put my ear plugs in, and waded into the museum. It was pretty incredible, capped off with the Sistine Chapel where I sat and strained to look up at the ceiling listening to a lecture about each segment of the image and Michelangelo’s struggles with the Pope. Wow!

I came back to my B&B to drop some stuff off and went around the corner to the highly rated Patties, a Roman burger joint where I had the best burger I have ever had. The meat was superb! With a full stomach, off I went!

After that I went to the much quieter Doria Pamphilj and was astonished at not only the Valasquez, but also the Caravaggio’s and the Brueghels. It is the most amazing personal collection of northern European artists that I have ever seen, probably rivaled only by the Reichsmuseum in Amsterdam.

As I exited the art gallery I headed up a block or two to the aptly named “Wedding Cake” to get a good vantage point for the sunset. The day started with rain but was ending with a spectacular sunset. I only got a piece of it but what was fascinating were the thousands of birds in the

sky. Very beautiful. I chatted with a fellow traveller who had gotten the perfect angle for the sunset and had set up his Samsung phone to do time lapse. I should really get one of those: set it up and it does everything itself!

And since I was there, I decided to hit the Capitoline Museum as well. I was going to do it in the morning but decided that I will rest my sore feet and visit a few churches before heading to the Borghese in the afternoon. The Roman forum and Flavian amphitheatre will have to wait for my next trip... Along with several dozens of other highlights that I couldn't pack in!

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