

Santa Maria in Monticelli



The church of **Santa Maria in Monticelli**, originally called *Santa Maria de Arenula*, is dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. This church is near the Ponte Garibaldi and Isola Tiberina.

History:

The Church of Santa Maria in Monticelli was erected on the site of a little hill (montecello) formed by the remains of the *Temple of Neptune* built in the 2nd century BC by the Greek architect Hermodorus of Salamis. The church is ancient; the date of its foundation is not known.

The church was restored for the first time in 1101 by Pascal II; it still conserves the fragments of apse mosaics from that time. The beautiful Romanesque campanile was probably built at this time. The tower was originally higher but reduced to its current size in the time of Paul V (1605-21), probably for reasons of stability.

Apart from the campanile, nothing remains of the ancient church following the reconstruction that took place in 1716 by Matthew Sassi, assisted by Giuseppe Sardi, at the behest of Pope Clement XI, and in 1860 by Francesco Azzuri at the behest of Pope Pius IX.

Exterior:

The 18th century facade by Matteo Sassi embodies two orders: the lower presents a portal that leads into the atrium; the upper has a big arched window with a balcony.

The campanile is from the 12th century. It has a square plan with five floors. The first four floors have arched windows, two per side on the bottom three floors and three per side on the fourth floor. The top floor has an opening supported by two columns on each side.

Interior:

The interior presents a basilica plan based on three naves and three chapels per side. The ancient columns that marked the aisles are now enclosed in large pillars, a consequence of the restoration of Sassi.

To the left of the entrance, inside a small iron grating, a very ancient head of a Pope in fresco with a double tiara, probably that of Paschal II by whom the church had been consecrated.

Entering the nave, to the right, we observe at its extremity, over the confessional, a good painting of the martyrdom of S. Eusebius.

At the extremity of the left aisle is a good painting of the Virgin and Child and the Baptist, by an unknown hand.

The church also houses works by Italian artists such as Mariani, Carracci (“Flagellazione”), Ruspi, Cariani and Conca. One of the chapels also holds a wooden Crocifisso from C.XIV.

- Over the first altar on the right is a painting of *Our Lord in the Garden*, by Odoardo Vicinelli;
- In the second chapel on the right, the *Flagellation*, fresco by Antonio Carracci of the sixteenth century ;
- In the third chapel in the right is the *Martyrdom of Saint Nympha* by Angelo Pucciatti. The Madonna beneath, called *Auxilium Christianorum* (Our Lady, Help of Christians), is by Vanni.
- The altar next the tribune, in the left aisle, has a painting of the Baptist preaching, by G. B. Pucciatti.
- In the second chapel on the left, a wooden crucifix from the 14th century is venerated in the church. Some sources claim that it's from the 11th century. This seems too early a date. St Bridget of Sweden (c. 1303-1373) is known to have prayed before the crucifix on many occasions;
- In the third chapel on the left is a reliquary and *Madonna and Child with Saints* Sebastiano Conca;

Over the great altar is a painting of *S. Francis, S. Philip Neri. S. Joseph and the Madonna*, by Pierre Parrocel, who also painted the angels at the sides of the mosaic portrait of our Savior, executed in the XI century.

There are fragments of a 12th century apse mosaic. The head of Christ the Redeemer is preserved.

Special notes:

For many years, the church has been closed for restorations. It's open at times, but if you go there and find that it's closed, ring the bell to the left of the main door (within reasonable hours). A priest from the congregation of the Padre Dottrinari will open, and may let you see the church. The priests here are French, so if you speak French, try using that language.

Artists and Architects:

Angelo Pucciatti (17th cent), Italian painter
Antonio Marziale [Carracci](#) (1583-1618), Italian painter.
Cesare [Mariani](#) (1826-1901), Italian painter
Francesco [Azzurri](#) (1827-1901), Italian architect
Giovanni Battista Puccetti (1693-1743), Italian painter
Giuseppe [Sardi](#) (1680-1753), Italian architect
Matteo Sassi (1646-1723), Italian architect
Odoardo [Vicinelli](#) (1684-1755), Italian painter of the late-Baroque period
Pierre [Parrocel](#) (1664-1739), French painter of the late-Baroque period
Raffaello [Vanni](#) (1587-1673), Italian painter of the Baroque
Sebastiano [Conca](#) (c. 1680-1764), Italian painter

Location:

Address: Via di Santa Maria in Monticelli 28, 00186 Roma

Coordinates: [41°53'35"N 12°28'26"E](#)

Info:

Hours: Open 07:00 am-08:00am, 05:30pm-08:00pm. Closed August.

Mass times: Everyday: 19: 00

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Links and References:

1. http://romanchurches.wikia.com/wiki/Santa_Maria_in_Monticelli
 2. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DFJrph0fbc0>
 3. <http://rometour.org/church-santa-maria-monticelli-little-mountains.html>
 4. http://translate.google.com/translate?hl=en&sl=it&u=http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chiesa_di_Santa_Maria_in_Monticelli
 5. http://www.info.roma.it/monumenti_dettaglio.asp?ID_schede=830
 6. http://www.romaspqr.it/roma/CHIESE/Chiese_Medievali/S_Maria_Monticelli.htm
 7. <http://www.060608.it/en/cultura-e-svago/luoghi-di-culto-di-interesse-storico-artistico/chiese-cattoliche/santa-maria-in-monticelli.html>
 8. http://translate.google.com/translate?hl=en&sl=fr&u=http://frederic.simon1.free.fr/Santa_Maria_in_Monticelli.html
- a. Donovan, Jeremiah; ROME ANCIENT AND MODERN AND ITS ENVIRONS; 1842
- b. Sharp, Mary; A GUIDE TO THE CHURCHES OF ROME; 1966