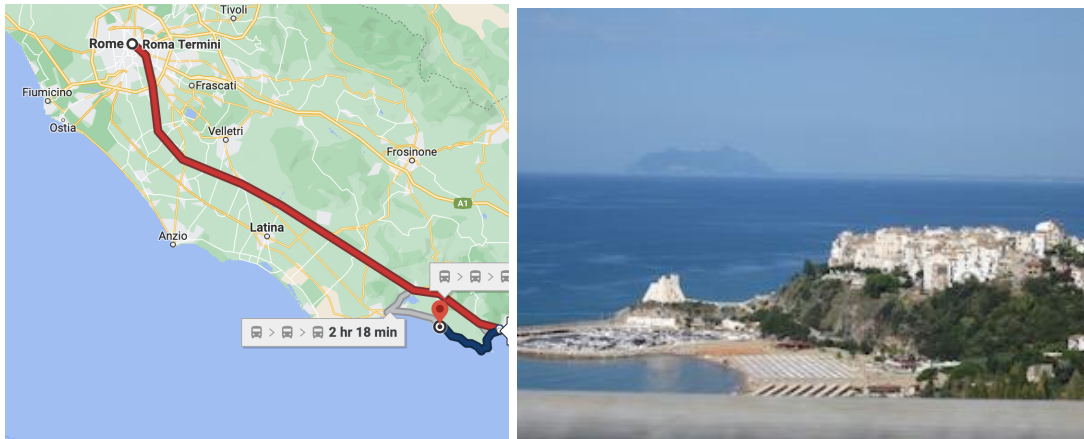


A Day-Trip to a White Seaside Village: Sperlonga



Getting There

Take the regional train from Roma Termini - Fondi-Sperlonga (1 hour and 15 min). You can book at trenitalia.it; cost is about €7 at present. From the Fondi-Sperlonga station there is a shuttle bus that takes you to Sperlonga (about 15 min.). You should buy Cotral tickets at the newsstand in Rome before departing or ask at Borromini Center.

What do do

Romans go to Sperlonga to enjoy the sandy beaches and quaint white-washed village; it is really like going to a Greek island on a day-trip from Rome. Make sure to spend time in the narrow step streets of the upper town, not just the beachfront below.

There are some free public beaches but consider paying the extra fee for a *ombrellone e lettino* to experience the beach Italian style. Aside for the beach, the Villa of Tiberius outside of town is an important cultural site worth visiting both for the sculpture collection and the dramatic cave which the Emperor Tiberius used as a summer dining hall. In the town try to visit the small churchi Santa Maria and the Truglia Tower.

Brief History

Located near the Via Flacca, but also on the edge of the Pontine Marshes, Roman Spelunca (Latin for cave or grotto) was originally only known for the grotto on the coast, after which it was named. A Republican villa was built here, later owned by the emperor Tiberius. The Grotto was embellished by Tiberius into a magnificent triclinium, mentioned by ancient writers, and with the famous exquisite sculptures which were discovered in situ. After the fall of the Western Roman Empire, in the 6th century, the ruins of the imperial residence served as refuge for local people. Later the population began to move to the nearby promontory of St. Magnus, in order to escape the unhealthy marshes and the Saracen attacks. The danger posed by the Saracens is made clear by the presence of many watchtowers all along the coast to Gaeta. In 1534 the town was destroyed by the Ottoman fleet under Barbarossa. In the 18th and 19th centuries Sperlonga recovered and acquired some noble residences, and agriculture flourished. However, the touristic expansion occurred only after the opening of the Terracina-Gaeta coastal road (also known as the Via Flacca) in 1957, the building of which led to the discovery of the sculptures in the grotto.

Where to Eat

There are several bars around the main piazza at the top of the town, and more choices along the boardwalk on the north side below town. During the summer you can also eat right at the bathing clubs on the beach.

- Altrò Restaurant - <https://altrosperlonga.it/>
- Ristorante gli Archi - <https://gliarchi.com/>
- Restaurant Il Porticciolo - <https://www.instagram.com/porticciolosperlonga/?hl=en>
- Ristorante Ricciola Saracena - <https://www.ricciolasaracena.it/>

Reading and Viewing

Here are a few links that may help you prepare for your day-trip.

- <https://mamalovesitaly.com/things-to-do-in-sperlonga-italy/>
- <https://adventuresofilnicki.com/sperlonga-italy/>
- Films set in Sperlonga? Parts of Contempt, Jean-Luc Godard's acclaimed 1963 film were shot here. Vittorio De Sica made the movie Two Women, starring Sophia Loren, nearby.

Enjoy your trip! And help us improve this for future students by sharing your finds.