

The Watch List

Twenty-four short films and documentaries, one cluster per day of the trip — so that the Colosseum, the Sistine ceiling and the crater on Vesuvius arrive already meaning something. Every link is live and tyeable. The whole list runs 7½ hours, but the essentials for any one day are 25–30 minutes; the feature-length films are the optional deep end.



24 FILMS

7H 25M TOTAL

• BEFORE YOU GO **Groundwork** 59 min

- **Rick Steves Rome**
Rick Steves' Europe • 54:59 • youtu.be/Ra3h6yKLSq4
The one hour that ties the whole Rome half together — watch this on the plane.
- **Espresso Etiquette: Italian coffee rules and curiosities**
Inevitally • 4:12 • youtu.be/T5XBcaBo4hA
Four minutes that will save you from ordering a cappuccino after lunch.

• TUE 15 SEP **Rome on foot** 29 min

- **How Was That Built? — The Pantheon**
Bloomsbury • 8:07 • youtu.be/TmbvYU9XUzQ
Why a 2,000-year-old unreinforced concrete dome is still standing over your head.
- **Trevi Fountain Secrets: the Aqua Virgo and Vicus Caprarius**
A Stranger in Roma • 8:41 • youtu.be/1J7j92vA2XY
The water in the fountain arrives by an aqueduct built in 19 BC. Still.
- **Art of Europe: Baroque Sculpture**
Rick Steves' Europe • 5:21 • youtu.be/uSjfCnQ7t60
Bernini in five minutes — sets up Piazza Navona today and St Peter's tomorrow.
- **How Cacio e Pepe Became an Iconic Roman Dish**
Eater • 7:06 • youtu.be/4_YLp4JxIX4
Homework for dinner in Trastevere. Three ingredients, endless opinions.

• WED 16 SEP **The Vatican** 25 min

- **Ceiling of the Sistine Chapel**
Smarthistory • 6:46 • youtu.be/PEE3B8Fsuc0
You get one crowded look at it. Know what you're looking for first.
- **The Hidden History of St Peter's Basilica**
toldinstone • 10:40 • youtu.be/H2EHKnZTjWg
Built on a Roman cemetery, out of stone quarried from the Colosseum.
- **Vatican Museums: Laocoön and 'the Arm of Memory'**
Vatican News • 7:38 • youtu.be/_KoX4jDXINs
The statue dug up in a vineyard in 1506 that redirected the Renaissance.

• THU 17 SEP **Ancient Rome** 2h 22m

- **The Genius Construction of Ancient Rome's Colosseum**
Timeline • 43:34 • youtu.be/ZZSo19Ps1QY
The best single film on the building itself — start here if you pick one.
- **Rome's Greatest Monument: The Colosseum (full series)**
Odyssey • 1:28:19 • youtu.be/CU2A0z8sav4
The long version, including the underground you're trying to get tickets for.
- **Augustan Rome in 3D: the Forum Romanum**
History in 3D • 10:32 • youtu.be/4zkU_kJ1R_8
Watch this the morning of — the Forum is rubble until you've seen it whole.

• FRI 18 SEP **South to Sorrento** 9 min

- **Serene Sorrento**
Rick Steves' Europe • 5:06 • youtu.be/iyjQGXE5aeE
The old town and Marina Grande, in the order you'll walk them.
- **A Legacy of Lemons on the Amalfi Coast**
The New York Times • 3:28 • youtu.be/yD7AiC_40WA
The terraced groves you'll be walking past all week, and the family who keep them.

• SAT 19 SEP **Capri** 1h 20m

- **Capri: Pricey Towns and Priceless Views**
Rick Steves' Europe • 2:59 • youtu.be/ZRxOvA5TMAs
Three minutes on Anacapri, Monte Solaro and what the day actually costs.
- **The Reluctant Emperor: Tiberius's Unlikely Rise to Power**
Odyssey • 1:16:43 • youtu.be/pQZeDG8I4gE
The emperor who ran the empire from this island for eleven years and never went home.

• SUN 20 SEP **Pompeii & Vesuvius** 1h 01m

- **Pompeii: Window on Ancient Rome**
Rick Steves' Europe • 4:39 • youtu.be/dn14wkg0mhM
The short orientation. Watch it on the drive down.
- **Mount Vesuvius, AD 79: The First 24 Hours**
Invicta • 19:48 • youtu.be/TENWJTq4aM8
Hour by hour, from the first column of ash to the pyroclastic surge. The one to watch.
- **Naples and Pompeii**
Rick Steves' Europe • 25:06 • youtu.be/mgx0D4JgdMYy
Full episode: the city, the ruins and the mountain in one arc.
- **When will Mount Vesuvius erupt again?**
60 Minutes Australia • 11:07 • youtu.be/G5JgvHTd08g
Three million people live on its slopes now. Sobering, standing on the Gran Cono.

• MON 21 SEP **The open day** 8 min

- **How Limoncello Is Made Using Huge Amalfi Coast Lemons**
Insider Food • 8:00 • youtu.be/laErpfkq2y0
A day with nothing in it deserves a film with nothing in it but lemons.

• TUE 22 – WED 23 SEP **The Amalfi Coast** 27 min

- **Italy's Amalfi Coast**
Rick Steves' Europe • 25:05 • youtu.be/1rx9dWL6cAc
Amalfi, Ravello and the cliff road — the full episode, worth it before you move.
- **Positano: Jewel of the Amalfi Coast**
Rick Steves' Europe • 1:34 • youtu.be/DdwjDWwf2AU
Ninety seconds. Watch it and decide whether Positano gets a day.

• THU 24 SEP **Back north, Monti** 6 min

- **Tesserae as Time Machine: the mosaics of Santa Maria Maggiore**
Smarthistory • 5:47 • youtu.be/kIx0CdFH_o
Fifth-century mosaics, a few streets from the last hotel. A quiet way to finish.