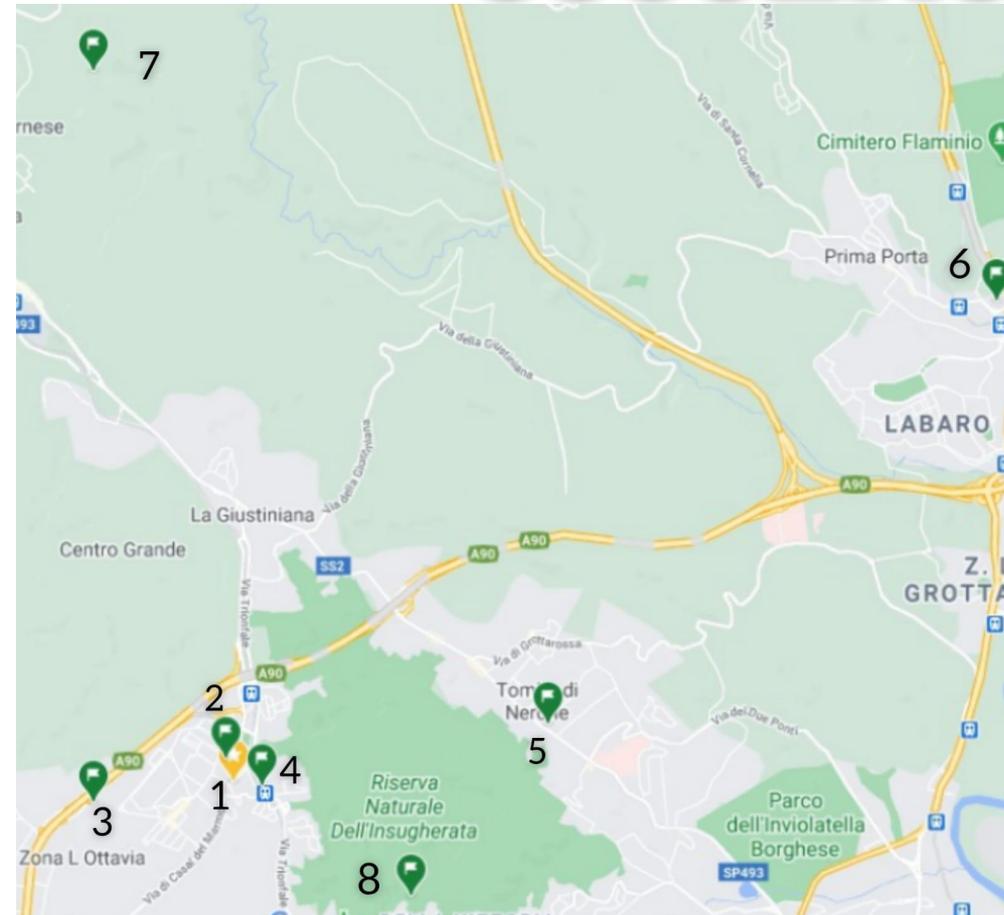


# SCUOLA IC OCTAVIA

Welcome to our virtual tour to discover the **Ancient Rome** in the northern suburbs of the Italian capital!

We will start the journey from **our school** and we will arrive at the **Via Francigena**.

1. I.C. Octavia
2. Hypogeum of the Octavians
3. Nymphaeum of Lucchina
4. Via Trionfale
5. Tomb of Nero
6. Villa Livia
7. Veio
8. Via Francigena



# HYPOGEUM OF THE OCTAVIANS

Our tour starts from Ottavia. The Ottavia district is in the north of Rome and it's where our school is. We actually attend the Istituto Comprensivo IC Octavia which, as you can guess, it's named after the discovery of this gentilitial Sepulchre of the Octavians we want to present. ***But what is an hypogeum?***

The Hypogeum of the Octavians is an underground tomb, dating back to the first half of the 3rd century A.D., which is located in Rome in the Ottavia district, a few kilometers from the via Trionfale – once called Via Triumphalis, it was an ancient road that connected Rome to the ancient Etruscan city of Veii.

## **SOME INFORMATION ABOUT THE ARCHEOLOGICAL DISCOVERY:**

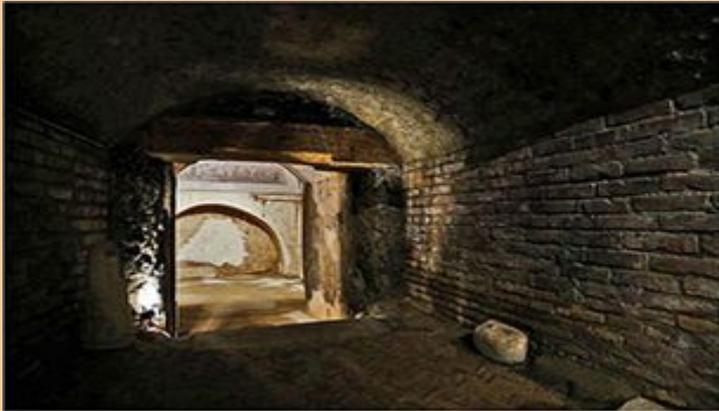
Underground, on the occasion of the construction of some buildings in 1920, a sepulchral hypogeum was found inside which there were frescoes and sarcophagi with the names of those who had been buried there in ancient times including Octavia Paolina – a six-year-old-girl, who died an early death - his father Octavius Felix and other family members. It is located under a private property and it represents a precious artifact of historical and archaeological interest. The owners are given the permanent task to allow the tourists to visit to the hypogeum previous reservation.

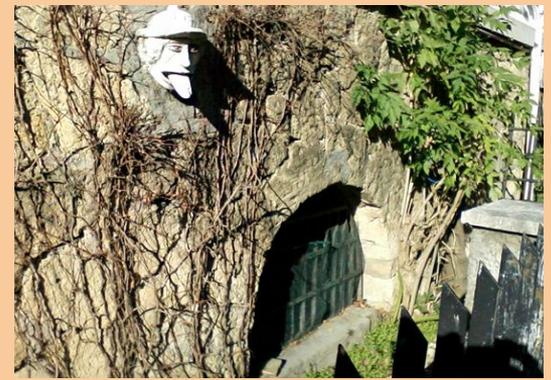


# DESCRIPTION OF THE HYPOGEUM AND THE STORY OF THE “SWEET” OCTAVIA PAOLINA

Its monumentality represented the social position of the owner, who belonged to the gentilitia class – The name gentilitium was the part of a name that identified one as a Roman citizen.

The main room with the three large main niches is preceded by a frescoed vestibule with geometric patterns that is accessed through a long corridor dug into the tuff, of which the brick floor is still preserved.





The hallway door at the time of discovery was found largely damaged and collapsed along with the walls that supported it. The staircase, except for the last three steps, is also not original.

A wooden door, now lost, closed the burial chamber: the threshold and the travertine lintel preserve the holes for the collection of the swing.

The floors of the vestibule and the burial chamber are made of black and white mosaics.

Contrary to the expectations of the ancient owner M. Octavius Felix, the hypogeum first welcomed his daughter defined by him in the writing on the sarcophagus "very sweet" and "dear": the frescoes and the interior decorations of the tomb are dedicated to the childish world, with children intent on playing and capturing huge roses, in the presence of Hermes, accompanying the spirits, and the little girl, who died at the age of six, Octavia Paolina, laid in the niche on the axis at the entrance.

Two other family members were welcomed into the side niches.

Octavius Felix was probably the last to be buried in the middle of the room.

Octavius Felix's sarcophagus also bears the name of the freedman who buried him.

At the time of the discovery of the burial room in 1920, the Hypogeum of the Octavians housed all the sarcophagi. Today, the only one still present is that of Octavius Felix, while that of his daughter is in Milan and the other two sarcophagies are in Rome, one is at the National Roman Museum of Palazzo Massimo and the other is at the Ministry of Education in Rome.



# NYMPHAEUM OF LUCCHINA

The nymphaeum of Lucchina is near a small public garden here in Ottavia and it represents just one of many other cases in Italy where overbuilding, urbanization and indiscriminate development only apparently hide the magnificent traces of ancient and fascinating civilizations of the past, whose treasures finally return back to the light. The nymphaeum was a bathing place reserved to the aristocratic part of the Roman society. It was a quiet place far from the centre where people wanted to escape the hustle and bustle of Rome.

Although it is possible that before it was a burial site.

**EXCAVATION:** The findings were discovered in 1990 and other findings were disclosed in 2014 on occasion of a meeting organized by the Cultural Association of Lucchina and Ottavia.



The plaque of the findings of the nymphaeum of Lucchina

# THE FINDINGS

Not just the nymphaeum was found. Later, particular tombs dating back to the sixth century B.C. were discovered, together with some tracks of "block houses" made of tuff and nearby a tuff quarry. Furthermore other objects had been found: e.g. ceramic objects, coins made of bronze, a pair of finely crafted gold earrings and last but not least an imposing road of about 2,600 years ago with ditches dug by cart wheels - probably the remains of a road that connected Veii (see the second picture on your right below).



# THE HIDDEN MUSEUM

Unfortunately it is not always open to the public yet but you can reserve a visit in advance to have the possibility to visit these precious findings.

The access is free but remember to reserve a tour calling the number 06 684851 of the Ministry for Cultural Heritage. If you do it, you'll admire evocative findings such as fantastic mosaic floors and frescos. In the meantime enjoy some pictures of the discoveries.



# VIA TRIONFALE



In order to reach our school in the North of Rome you have to cross this important road called Via Trionfale.

This route is about 11 km. The street is always very busy during the day except for some sections that are one-way traffic.

The street numbering is particular because it expresses the metric distance from the Capitoline Hill (in Italian Campidoglio Hill), seat of the municipality of Rome.

This numbering was decided by the Town Council in 1955 that resolved to leave the current civic numbering system of the initial section of the Via Trionfale.

The Via Trionfale comes to have house numbers that reach up to 14,500!

# HISTORY

The Via Trionfale was an ancient road through which the victorious Roman generals entered Rome after their battles. The name given to the road (once “Triumphalis”) most likely dates back to the victory of the Roman Marcus Furius Camillus over the Etruscan city of Veii around 396 B.C., for which it was granted the right to a triumph on the road that led from Veii to the Capitoline Hill. This road extends from south to north up to the Hypogeum of the Octavians and the nymphaeum of Lucchina. Veii, Hypogeum of the Octavians and the nymphaeum of Lucchina are other, in fact, important signs of Ancient Rome also included in our itinerary that starts from our school.



# INFO

Near Ottavia on 23 January 2007, the link road that connected the Via Trionfale with the \*Grande Raccordo Anulare (\*the long orbital motorway that encircles Rome) was inaugurated. The link road was finally open to traffic around January 2009.



# TOMB OF NERO

The tomb of Nero is an ancient monument located in the neighborhood near our school (IC OCTAVIA).

At the sixth kilometer of the Via Cassia, an ancient Roman consular road that connected Rome with Etruria, there is an ancient vault known as the Tomb of Nero. The place also gives its name to the surrounding neighborhood.

But in fact, the tomb does not belong to the famous Emperor Nero but to the Prefect Publio Vibio Mariano, procurator of Sardinia, and his wife Reginia Massima. The Tomb of Nero district is located between Giustiniana and Tor di Quinto, one of the greenest and quietest places in the city of Rome. Nearby there is Veio Regional Park, which is another place of both historical and naturalistic interests.

At the time of the Etruscans, this area was crossed by the Etruscan road Via Veientana which doesn't exist any more.



*Epitafio di C. Vibio Mariano, detto di Nerone*

# ORIGIN OF THE NAME

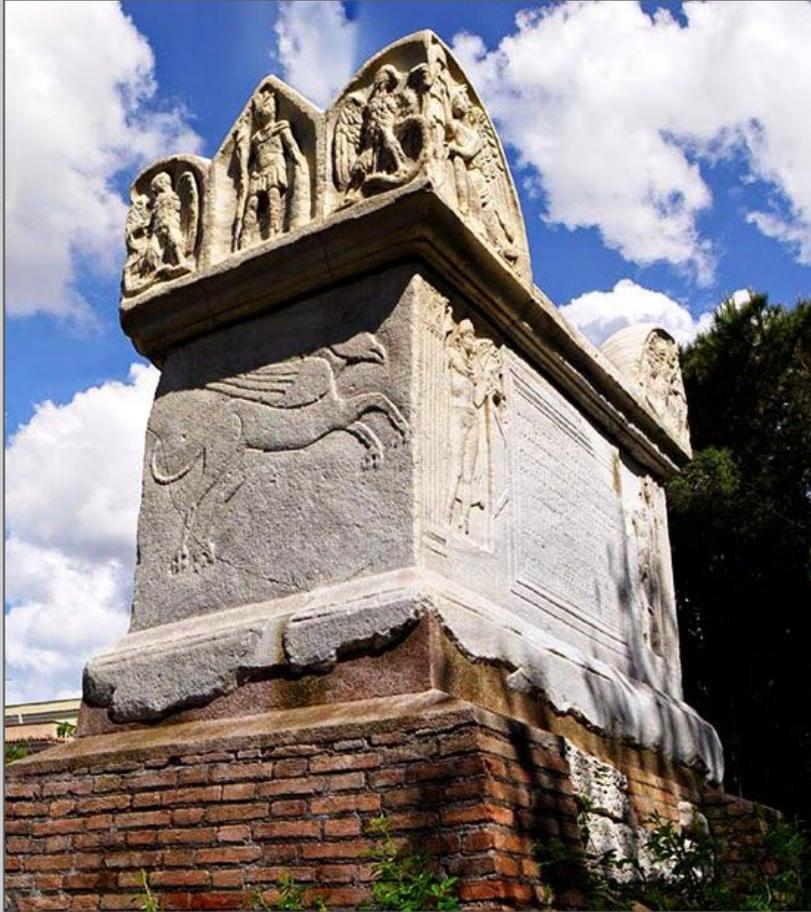
The wrong attribution of the name was born after Pope Pasquale II in the 12th century ordered to demolish the real tomb of Nero known as the tomb of Domizi. To appease the rising revolt, he stated that Nero's ashes were inserted in this tomb, even if it's false.

A second reason for giving him this name is that moving east, not far away, there is the place where Nero committed suicide. This suicide happened at the Villa of Faonte, a freedman, on June 9th 68 A.D.

It is said that Nero slipped while he was riding a horse. Upon falling, he was attacked by the crowd of soldiers and he was forced to flee. As the guards were approaching him, the emperor committed suicide. The death and the lack of news about his burial led those who remained loyal to the emperor to believe in Nero's ghost. It has become famous and widespread, especially in the northern countryside of the city.



# DESCRIPTION



It is a grand tomb that is made of very rare Asian materials, which also are to be found in the marble on the ancient Consular road. It is known to be 9 metres high and 2.6 m wide. However, thanks to an old document, it is now certain that the tomb formerly was 16m × 3m.

At the top, on the so-called crown, there are characters from the politics of the Roman Empire. On both sides, there are two griffins, animals from mythology. Then, there is a Latin inscription on the facade praising the dead prefect and the actions he performed in life. The outline is surrounded by the figure of the prefect on one side and an unrecognizable emperor on the other one. Being finally accessible to all of us we recommend going to see it for its importance.

# VILLA LIVIA



The Villa of Livia is an ancient Roman villa at Prima Porta, 12 kilometres north of Rome along the ancient Roman road of Via Flaminia. It was probably part of Livia Drusilla's dowry she brought when she married the first emperor Augustus, her second husband, in 39 B.C. It was her sumptuous country residence, while she also possessed a luxurious residence on the Palatine Hill in Rome. The villa occupied the height dominating the view down the Tiber Valley to the city of Rome. Some of the walls that retained the villa's terraces can still be seen.

The location was strategically important due to the confluence of several roads, and the northern entrance to Rome. The name Prima Porta ("First Door") came from an arch of the aqueduct over the Via Flaminia, which brought water to the villa and which travelers saw as the first visible sign of Rome already visible from far away.

# HISTORY

It was built and modified in four stages. The earliest stage is of a Republican date, the latest of the time of Constantine the Great.

Its Latin name, Villa ad Gallinas Albas, referred to its breed of white chickens.

The site was discovered and explored in 1596, but it was not recognized as the Villa of Livia until the 19th century. In 1867, the famous heroic marble statue of Augustus, the Augustus of Prima Porta, was found. Now, you can see the statue in the Vatican Museums. The magisterial Augustus to be found here is a marble copy of a bronze statue.



In the 19th century, the villa belonged to the Convent of Santa Maria in Via Lata. The villa and gardens have been excavated and can be visited.

There are three vaulted subterranean rooms, the largest of which contained superb illusionistic frescoes of garden views with trees, plants, flowers and fruits.

These have been removed and brought to Rome, where, following cleaning and restoration, they have been reinstalled in the National Roman Museum of Palazzo Massimo.

A new series of more meticulous modern excavations began in 1970.

More modern scientific work began in 1995, carried out by the Soprintendenza Archeologica di Roma (archeological authority in Rome) and directed by Professor Gaetano Messineo, together with the Swedish Institute in Rome.



# GARDEN ROOM FRESCO

Villa Livia is important to know the customs and habits of Romans. In fact, the Roman activity of dining was much more than the satisfaction of human needs — it was a ritual of great social and political importance. As regards the frescos that have been discovered here, there is an incredible accuracy and variety of plant species.



# VEIO

## VEIO

- Veio is a natural oasis near our school in the city of Rome.



# HISTORY

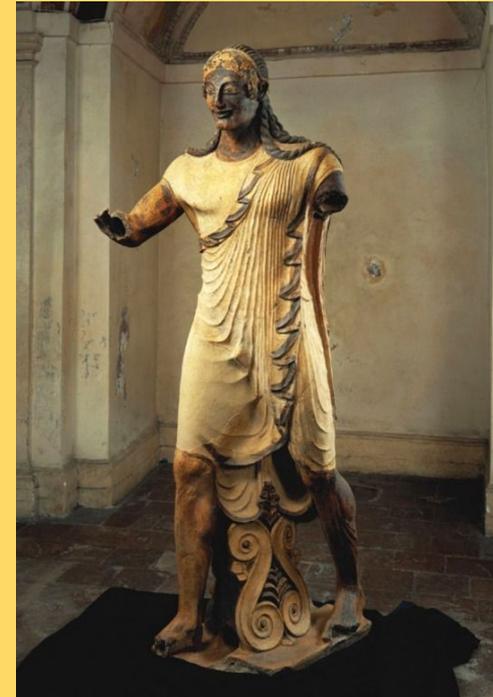
The Etruscan city of Veio city was born between the 8th and the 5th century B.C., it was the most southern town of Etruria. Veio was flourishing between 8th-6th century B.C. and its possessions extended between the right bank of Tiber river and the Bracciano lake. This city was against Rome for the control of the commercial port in the Tiber river and for the salines. When Rome was against Veio, the Etruscan city was very rich and it decided to ally with another town called Fidene because they shared the same interests and needed a mutual protection against the Romans. Veio was ruled by kings. In the Etruscan age people worshiped Giunone and Minerva gods. In the 6th century B.C. there were a school for artists and also the famous Etruscan artist Vulca studied there. The war against Rome was very long and the Etruscan people strongly and fiercely resisted to the Roman siege. The most famous episode was the battle against a Roman Fabii family in 477 B.C., after the Quinto Fabio's killing by the Etruscan Veientes.

This battle finished with the killing of 306 members of the gens Fabii. After 10 years of the Roman siege, Marco Furio Camillo, definitively destroyed Veio city. This place comes back to life in the Middle Ages with the birth of the Isola Farnese village. The Romans conquered Veio and the city began dilapidating and in this place a lot of Roman prominent people began to build their country houses. With the spread of Christianity, in this place people built a lot of catacombs. In Middle ages people built a lot of castles and towers to control the land and then the first medieval villages were born. In modern age in this land there were some farms where peasants worked the land in the surrounding countryside.



In 1900s, with the first archaeological excavations, the remains of the old Etruscan city were found. High walls surrounded the city and a main road crossed Veio. Around the city some Etruscan necropolis have been found with painted tombs like «Tomba delle Anatre» and «Tomba dei leoni ruggenti». The most important monument is the statue of Apollo that was found in 1916 in Portonaccio temple (now this statue is exposed at the Museo Nazionale Etrusco of Villa Giulia in piazzale di Villa Giulia 9).

The artist Vulca made the Apollo statue in painted pottery and it represents the god in natural size and he was put in the top of the temple. Apollo is represented with braids, almond eyes and plump lips. A part of the statue of Hercules was also found in this park: these sculptures are part of a group of statues that represents the mythological fight between Apollo and Hercules for the golden Horns Deer.



# FLORA AND FAUNA

In this park there are a lot of woods where there are different kinds of trees like chestnut trees, maple trees and holm oak trees. In Veio park there are different types of animals: mammals like weasels, badgers and foxes and some raptors that have their nests in the woods of Veio park.

We are so lucky because we live near this area of Rome, not contaminated by smog and pollution. In this park it's possible to do a lot of things: we can go there with friends and family, we can relax and join nature.



# VIA FRANCIGENA



Would you want to reach us on foot? You can if you walk through the Via Francigena!

The Via Francigena is part of a bundle of ancient routes running from Canterbury to France to Rome and Apulia, where there were the ports of embarkation for the Holy Land - a destination for pilgrims and crusaders.

# HISTORY



This road was born because of the strategic need of the Longobards who needed to connect their main city, Pavia, with the southern duchies of Spoleto and Benevento. Later it became a route for pilgrims.

In the Middle Ages the pilgrimage to Rome was one of the three Peregrinationes Maiores (Rome, Santiago de Compostela and Jerusalém).

For this reason pilgrims from all over Europe went to Italy. Some stopped in Rome, others continued to the south to embark for the Holy Land. Pilgrims began to pass through the Alps to enter Italy. When Longobard domination gave way to that of the Franks, traffic on the Route also grew at that time, which established itself as the main link between north and south of Europe.

The name "Francigena" indicates the route that "from the Land of the Franks" allowed pilgrims from other parts of Europe to reach Rome. Therefore, the former Via di Monte Bardone, once a Longboard minor route, changed its name to Via Francigena, or "road originated from France".

# INFO



The Italian section of the Via Francigena, that is the one that goes from the Gran San Bernardo to Rome, is about 945 km long, while its total length is 1600 km. The travel varies widely depending on how you cross it. It would range from one and a half months for those who move on foot to 15 days for those who ride bicycles.