

PIAZZA NAVONA

AND ITS MONUMENTS



The origin of the square

The square sits over the *Stadio di Domiziano*, built in 1st century AD.

This 30.000-seat stadium was used to host athletic meets, and later animal fights and gladiatorial combats.

It disappeared and, just in 15th century, the arena was found out and Rome's central market was transferred here from Campidoglio.

We can see what remains of the subterranean stadium from *Via di Tor Sanguigna*.

Today, during the period of Christmas and especially on epiphany, Piazza Navona becomes a typical place to go, with all the Christmas'stalls.

Four Rivers Fountain

The Four Rivers Fountain in Piazza Navona, commissioned in 1674, is one of Bernini's most important works in Rome. This fountain has four characters, that represent four rivers (the Nile, the Ganges, the Danube, and the Rio de la Plata), one for each continent of the then-known world. Than there is also the flora and the fauna of each continent.



Borromini VS Bernini: the legend

There's a legend about that fountain, that shows the rivalry between Bernini and another artist, Borromini. In fact in front of Bernini's fountain, there's the church of *St. Agnese in Agone*, realised by Borromini. In *the fours river fountain* we can see a character that tries to repair himself with the hand, from the fall of the church. But this story remains just a legend because the church was built some years after the fountain. Actually we can see that St. Agnese's statue of Borromini, that was built after the fountain, is turned by the opposite side of the *Four Rivers Fountain*, like if she doesn't want to look at it.

Fontana Del Moro

- Designed by Giacomo della Porta in 1576
- The moor was added by Bernini in the mid-17^o century, but the Tritons are 19th century copies
- Situated at the southern end of the square



Fontana del Nettuno

- Situated at the northern end of the piazza
- Made in 19th century
- It represents Neptune fighting with a sea monster, surrounded by sea nymphs



St. Agnese in Agone

- Made by Girolamo Rainaldi, Carlo Rainaldi, but especially Borromini
- In the Baroque façade, made by Borromini, we can see the typical concave line of the Baroque style, with the two towers designed as baldacchini
- Today the church hosts an annual season of chamber-music concerts



The legend of St. Agnese

The legend tells that the church is situated on the site where St. Agnes was martyred.

When she was stripped naked by her executioners before being killed, her hair miraculously grew and covered her body.

In this way they preserved her modesty.

The Palazzo Pamphilj

- It's the largest building on the square
- Made by Borromini and Girolamo Rainaldi, to celebrate the election of Giovanni Battista Pamphilj as Pope Innocent X
- The gallery is painted by Pietro da Cortona, and it shows scenes from the *Aeneid* by Virgilio
- Today the building is used to accommodate the Brazilian Embassy

