36 Hours

ROME

Early spring in the Eternal City means few crowds at its magnificent museums, co

By INGRID K. WILLIAMS

Paolo Sorrentino's mesmerizing film "La Grande Bellezza" ("The Great Beauty"), which won an Oscar for best foreign-language film in 2014, sparked controversy and endless conversation about the current state of the Italian capital. But one fact was indisputable: Rome, as the film's seductive backdrop, was gorgeous. This is true in every season, but especially in colder months when the summer flood of tourists ebbs. From outlying neighborhoods that beckon with new restaurants and bars, to the historic center, where Mr. Sorrentino's protagonist, Jep, wandered through so many scenes, Rome remains poised to prove that its beauty runs deep.

Friday

① 3 P.M. > BATHING BEAUTY

One of the most poignant scenes in "La Grande Bellezza" transpires at the ruins of the Terme di Caracalla, colossal Roman baths that date from the third century. Jep's twilight encounter with an illusory giraffe amid the spectacular ruins is memorable, but no tricks are needed to make this oftenoverlooked site unforgettable in the light of day either. The soaring walls of the complex, remarkably well-preserved in parts, are a terra-cotta-hued skeleton providing clues to the lost grandeur of this glorified gym, where amenities ranged from mosaic floors to thermal pools flanked by museumworthy marble sculptures. Admission, 6 euros, or \$6.70 at \$1.11 to the euro.

2 5:30 P.M. ➤ GALLERY HUNTING

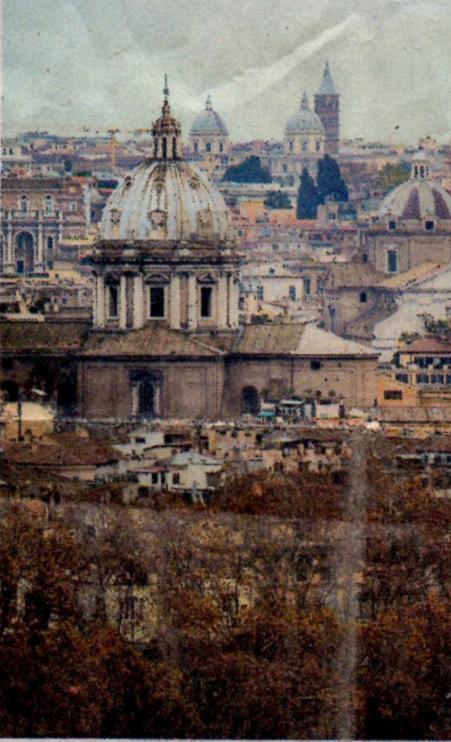
Fast-forward nearly two millenniums for a glimpse of what constitutes art in contemporary Rome by visiting a cluster of galleries near Campo de' Fiori. Start at Galleria Varsi, a two-year-old space dedicated to graffiti and street art that also organizes wall paintings across the city. Around the corner at Dorothy Circus Gallery, the bloodred walls showcase surrealist Pop Art. And nearby, a cobblestone courtyard and carved-stone fountain flank the entrance to the prestigious Galleria Lorcan O'Neill, which moved to this spacious location last year; until April 4, look for works by the emerging British artist Eddie Peake.

❸ 8 P.M. ➤ CENTOCELLE CHOW

Rome's traditional guanciale-laced pasta dishes — carbonara, amatriciana, gricia — are in no danger of extinction, but if more creative restaurants like Mazzo start opening, they might be. This tiny spot in the far-flung Centocelle neighborhood was opened in 2013 by a pair of talented young chefs intent on spinning Roman cuisine into deli-







PHOTOGRAPHS IS CHRIS CARMICHA

Quartiere Coppedè WALE DELLE MILIZIE VILLA BORGHESE Museo d'Arte VIA TIBURTINA Contemporanea Roma TIBER R. -(Macro) Pizzarium Come il Latte St. Peter's Basilica latican City D.O.M. MercatoMonti Emma Galleria Co.So. Cocktails & Social **Dorothy Circus Gallery** Lorcan O'Neill VIA PRENESTINA Pianostrada Rome Laboratorio di Cucina 653 . Galleria Varsi Birra Più 📶 Yeah! Pigneto Vineria Litro Mazzo VIALE AVENTINO -Terme di Caracatla VIALE DE TRASTEVERE -VIA OSTIENSE -- YIALE ACAIA L'Osteria di Monteverde Centrale Montemartini VIA CRISTOFORO PARCO DELLA CAFFARELLA San Paolo Fuori le Mura Map data by Open Street Map

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THE NEW YORK TIMES

Giovanni de

yeahpigneto.