



WTO – World Toilet Organization  
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## ***Roma – Public Toilet***

*Abstract*

Rome holds the lead among European cities in the lack of public toilets managed according to rules of decorum and urban hygiene. Several Roman daily newspapers, along with citizens, associations, and Italian and foreign blogs have been denouncing this fact for years. Arriving to Rome from abroad or even other Italian cities means to sweat out insufficient, remote, and shocking hygienic services.

Rome-based association “Embrice 2030” has long been committed to the promotion of a new culture that aspires to re-propose public toilets within the cityscape. Therefore, we made *Roma – Public Toilet. For a new culture of the public toilet*, a report that illustrates the Roman situation by telling the thousands “stories” interwoven with the use of public toilets on the capital’s soil (from Imperial-age *dolia curta* to public urinals to the public toilets of last century). This investigation aims to point out how the social gap was bridged over time. Its cultural framework is a systemic one, ranging from literature – with the copious occurrences of the “body” and its functions in fiction and prose – to the rise of a new tendency in urban culture, from environmental hygiene to the recycling of human waste.

In order to establish a fruitful dialogue with city administrators and press for a serious plan of public toilets implementation, *Roma – Public Toilet* also tackles the themes of access to service, the male and female declinations of design, and the most suitable materials and technologies according to individual situations.

With the coordination of Carlo Severati, the following authors contributed to the dossier: Gabriella Restaino and Maria Spina who, after a short history of the distribution of *vespasiani* and public toilets, provide a concise survey of the existing services in Rome complete with typologies and state of maintenance; Franca Fabrizi deals with the theme of national legislation and provides examples of local regulations; the Brussels-based group CollectiveDisaster illustrates a prototype for the Molenbeek district in which human organic waste is converted into *Terra-preta* to fertilize the neighbourhood’s vegetable gardens and green spaces; Emma Tagliacollo enumerates the recycling and potabilization processes of wastewater, including new solutions for the resilient city; Rosario Pavia outlines an urban plan for public toilets integrating their functions with other basic city services; Massimo Locci describes how some of the most important artists in history have worked on the theme of public toilets; Marco Giunta found unforgettable images of public toilets in film history; Alessandra Nizzi re-evokes the era of daytime hotels (which used to offer baths, toilets, hairdressing and restroom facilities); and Gianluca de Laurentiis selected and comments passages from great writers dealing “with latrines and physiological needs”.