

Europe for Visitors



Jane's Smart Art Guides

From [James Martin](#),
Your Guide to [Europe for Visitors](#).
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Guide Rating - ★★★★★

The Bottom Line

History, intrigue, passion and science all comes together in art. You don't need The Da Vinci Code to tell you that. Jane's Smart Art Audio Guides put all the background on the art in some of Europe's most touted sacred spaces at your fingertips. Use the CD or mp3 versions of the guide to give you background information before you go, then let Jane take you on a tour while you're there—an onsite tour that can be tailored to your pace and interests.

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Pros

- Get introduced to Europe's greatest art at your own pace
- Discover the culture and history that goes with the art you're seeing
- Available for your iPod or cd player

Cons

- May be a bit long and detailed for some

Description

- Contains hours of narration on several CDs or a mp3 download for your iPod or similar device.
- Get a better understanding of the cultural and artistic periods of art in Europe.
- Uncover the links between art, history, politics and religion in Europe.
- Audio tours of St. Peters and Sta. Maria del Popolo in Rome, and Our Lady Cathedral in Antwerp.

Guide Review - Jane's Smart Art Guides

It's tough to go through a dark church with a dog-eared guidebook trying to figure out what you're supposed to see. It's not always fun following a stranger waving an umbrella at a throng of babbling travelers through that cathedral either. If you're an independent traveler who wants to know all about Europe's finest art, Jane's Smart Art Guides are probably your best bet. Just pop a CD into the player, or cue up the mp3 on your iPod or similar device and you're set for an independent tour.

First Jane she takes you through 20 or 30 minutes of historical background you'll want to listen to before you hit the road. Then the rest is devoted to a step-by-step audio tour of the art site you've chosen. A small 6-8 page guide that comes in the CD package gives you the track listing and drawings of the site, which will be your map for the tour.

The tours cover exterior architecture and interior art and architecture. You can skip what you're not interested in by simply skipping a track-- a tour of St. Peter's Basilica can take as little as an hour and a half to as long as two hours.

Besides Jane's unwavering and authoritative voice, weaving historic and culture details into the art you're looking at, I liked that she also gives you clues to the living church and how to behave inside the more sacred parts of it.

If you really want to get inside the art (and sometimes inside the head of the artist who created it) Jane's Smart Art Guides seem a darn good way to do it.

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