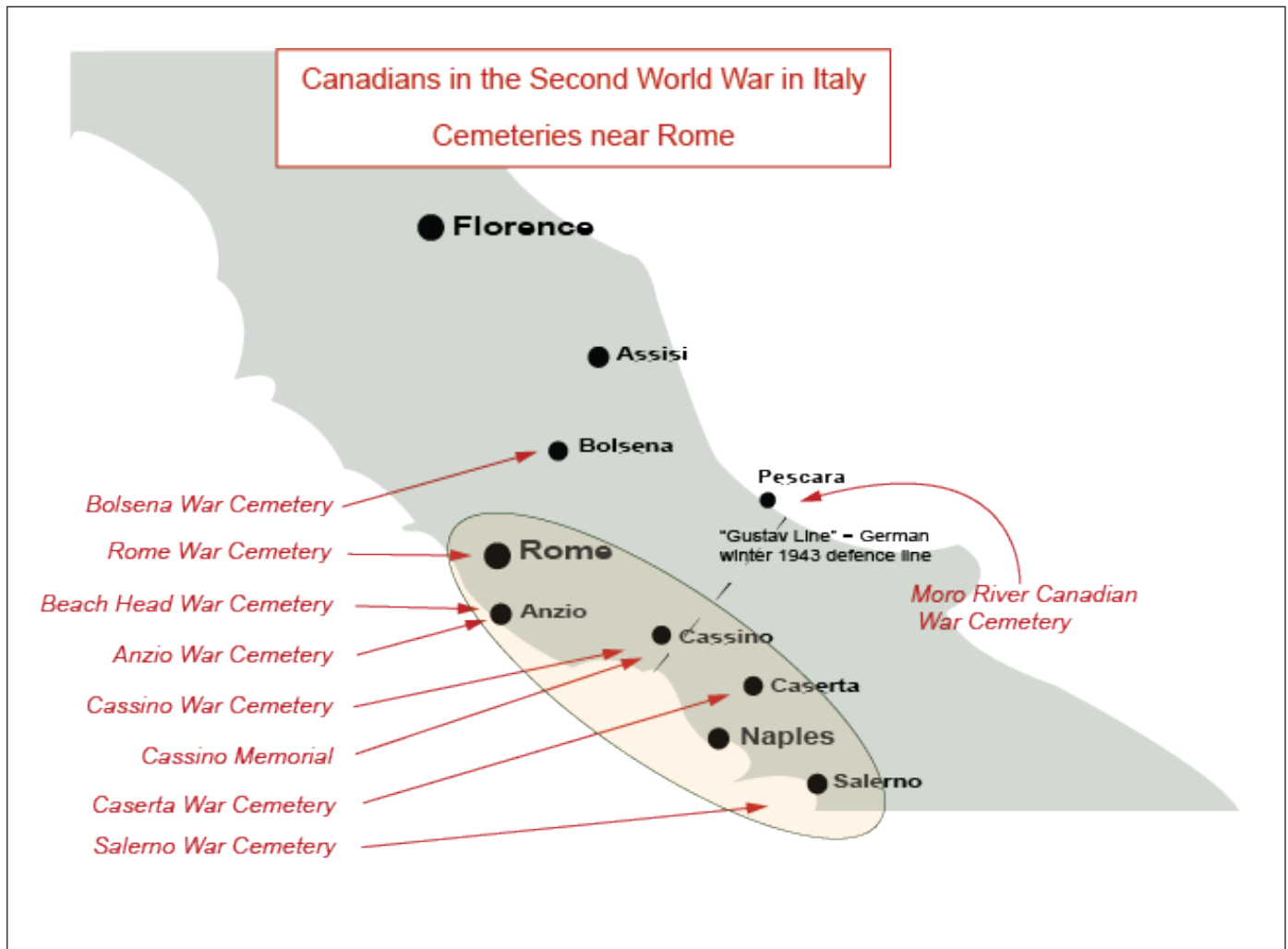




CANADA REMEMBERS GUIDE

WWII in One Day from Rome

Did you know that there is a Commonwealth War Cemetery with Canadian burials right in the heart of Rome? From there, you can visit several Commonwealth war cemeteries on the west coast, the scene of intense battles during late 1943 and early 1944 to break through the German's winter line of defence. This itinerary includes Cassino War Cemetery where there is also a large Memorial commemorating those whose final resting place is not known.





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A note to the traveller: This itinerary assumes that you are staying in Rome so it begins and ends there. However, if you will be in Naples, you can switch the order and start there, as well. The good news is that this is your trip so you can make alternations to customize it. You can email me at CanadaRemembersGuide@gmail.com if you have questions, need help, or have suggestions. Feel free to send me an email to let me know how the trip went.

*This itinerary starts from Rome's Fiumicino Leonardo da Vinci airport and heads south on the western coast to towns for which the Allies suffered heavy losses to liberate. I did not include the **Rome War Cemetery** (do this one while you are in Rome as it's easy to get to on foot from the Piramide metro station) or the **Bolsena War Cemetery** (which is to the north and would be a lovely separate day trip) or the **Moro River Canadian War Cemetery** (separate trip to the east coast), so the descriptions of those cemeteries are at the end of this itinerary.*

Note that, in Italy, when you enter an "Autostrade" – that is, an "A" road -- you will take a ticket at the automatic toll booth; make sure you keep the ticket somewhere safe and at hand because you need to use it to pay upon exiting the highway! The gas stations on the Autostrades have excellent restrooms and food, which you should use because the small towns you will be travelling through do not always have facilities. If you have more time, it's nice to break up this trip and stay a night in the Naples area.

Cemetery names in this itineary match the ones used by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) on their website (cwgc.org). However, it's not necessarily the name used by search engines so I have also provided the name that comes up on GPS map searches. The CWGC maintains all Commonwealth cemeteries and the website has good descriptions of each location. If you are looking for a particular person or regiment, this website is invaluable. If there is a padlock on the gate after hours, check the CWGC site for the code.

Don't forget to sign the Visitors Book. Bring small Canadian flags with you to lay at the headstones of our Canadian soldiers. If you are with kids, maybe they can paint a small rock with a flag or a message, which they can then lay at a headstone. Pack water and snacks in the car. Maps in this guide are for illustration and are not to scale. Safe travels! KW



CANADA REMEMBERS GUIDE

WWII in One Day from Rome

SELF-GUIDED ITINERARY:

9.00am **#1** Set GPS from Rome Fiumicino Leonardo da Vinci airport [65km] to **BEACH HEAD WAR CEMETERY** (Note map search shows: “Cimitero Monumentale di Guerra Britannico”). It is located 5km north of the town of Anzio on regional road SR207. [Address per CWGC is: Via Nettunense, km 34, 00040 Anzio which gets you close but my map search showed Via Nettunense 60, 00042 Anzio.] There is parking at the front entry gate. This cemetery contains 2,316 burials of which **69 are Canadians**. I stayed a long time here because it is large and beautiful with vine-laden, covered pathways and arbours. I laid a few flags at Canadian headstones throughout the cemetery before discovering that the majority were laid to rest together in one plot (Plot 17) toward the back left. (*Spend 15-30 minutes here.*)

10.15am **#2** Set GPS [4km] to **ANZIO WAR CEMETERY** (Note map search shows: “CWGC Anzio War Cemetery”), which is just one kilometre outside of Anzio [Address: Via del Cimitero, 00042 Anzio]. It’s confusing that there are two Commonwealth cemeteries in the same area. There is only one Canadian here, but I laid a flag and I recommend a quick stop because it’s a lovely spot with a view over the sea and, sadly, more than one thousand Commonwealth men buried here. (*Spend 15 minutes here.*)

Note: Anzio is the site of the notable American “Operation Avalanche” landing. For those who are interested, there is a very large American cemetery at Nettuno, just east of Anzio, with 7,900 servicemembers and civilians. There is also a Museum in Anzio called the Anzio Beach Head Museum (“Museo dello Sbarco de Anzio” co-located with the Archeological Museum in the Villa Adelea [Address: Via di Villa Adele 2, 00040 Anzio] about Operation Avalanche with a lot of memorabilia, photos and films. If you add these stops, you will have to adjust your timing.

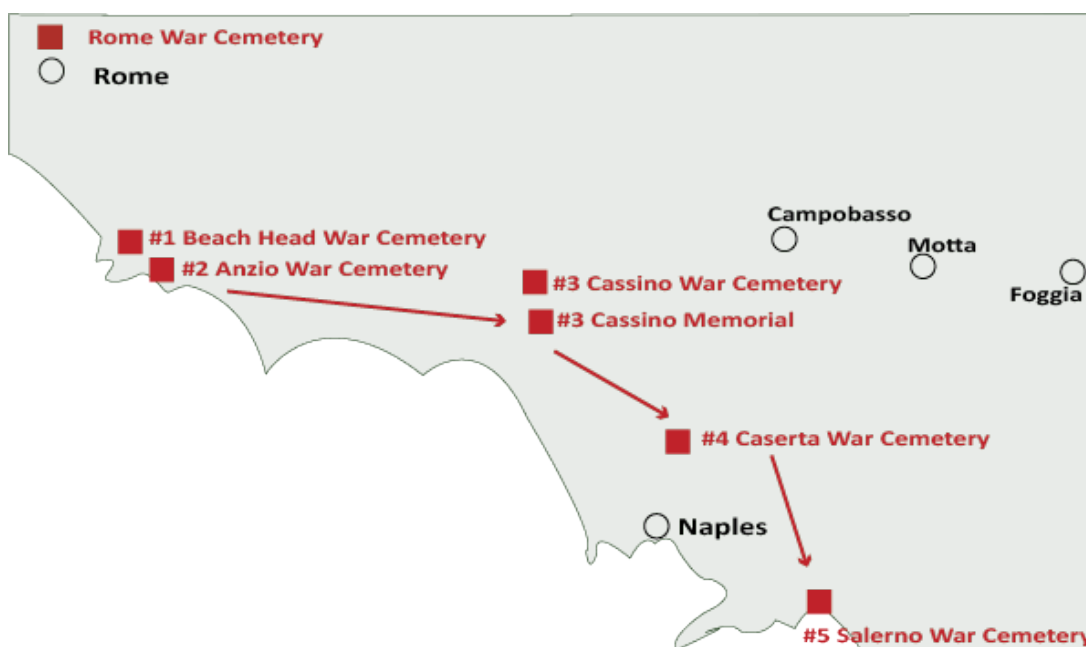
11.00am **#3** Set GPS [140km] to **CASSINO WAR CEMETERY** and **CASSINO MEMORIAL** (Note map search shows: “Commonwealth War Cemetery of Cassino”). It is located on the southern edge of the town of Cassino with a view up to the Abbey of Monte Cassino. [Search by name or use the address from CWGC: Via S. Angelo, 03043 Cassino or also “SP76, 03043 Cassino”] This incredible cemetery has more than four thousand graves, of which **855 are Canadians**. This is a must-see. The walls of the Cassino Memorial frame a reflection pool and name another four thousand soldiers killed in the war but whose whereabouts remain unknown, of which **193 are Canadians**. (*Spend 30-60 minutes here.*)



CANADA REMEMBERS GUIDE

WWII in One Day from Rome

2.00pm **#4** Set GPS [75km] to **CASERTA WAR CEMETERY**. (Note map search shows: “CWGC Caserta War Cemetery”). The cemetery is at the northern edge of the town of Caserta in a fairly busy part of town [Address: Via Generale Luigi Talamonti 5, 81100 Caserta]. The entrance to the parking lot (which is shared with a large, adjacent communal cemetery), is immediately off a roundabout (so I missed the entrance on the first pass!). Drive to the very end of the parking lot and you will see the dark green CWGC sign for the cemetery at the entry gates. Of the 769 Commonwealth burials here, **99 are Canadians**. (Spend 15-30 minutes here.)



3.15pm **#5** Set GPS [94km] to **SALERNO WAR CEMETERY** which is 17km southeast and a bit inland from Salerno. (Note map search shows “Salerno Cimitero Militare”). [Address: Via G. Leopardi 1, 84090 Montecorvino Pugliano but “Via Vesuvio 1” also works]. My GPS was taking me to a side entry but there is parking in front of the main gate. Another heartbreaking cemetery with almost two thousand burials of which **27 are Canadians**.

Note: There is a museum in Salerno called “MOA Museum of Operation Avalanche” in nearby Eboli, which shows the Italian perspective of the bloody battles that took place in this area. Amazing collection of photos. It is best to park in the main square and walk up because the roads are VERY narrow!

----- RETURN TO ROME or stay in the area overnight -----



CANADA REMEMBERS GUIDE

WWII in One Day from Rome

ADDENDUM:

While in Rome: The **ROME WAR CEMETERY** is located in the heart of Rome within the old city “Aurelian” walls about five minutes walk from the Pyramid and the ancient Porto San Paolo city gate. If you are near the Colosseum, it’s only a 30-minute walk to the Rome War Cemetery [Address: Via Nicola Zabaglia 50, 00153 Rome]. This is an absolutely beautiful cemetery. The entryway, which houses the Visitors Book and the Cemetery Registry, is magnificent. The words inside the dome read, “Here the English fought for the Freedom of Italy to preserve the Ancient Friendship they have always shared.” Headstones feel protected by the high arches of the old city walls in the background. Of the 426 burials here, **22 are Canadians**.

This would be a separate trip from Rome: The **BOLSENA WAR CEMETERY** (Note map search shows: “Cimitero degli Inglesi, Bolsena”) is located two hours north of Rome on the eastern edge of the lovely Lake Bolsena, not far from Orvieto in the Umbria area [Address: SS2 Cassia Nord, 01027 Bolsena]. There is parking in front of the entry gates. From the car park, you walk down a wide, descending pathway with old stone steps to another gate. Just inside is the Registry shelter building. The cemetery has beautiful views and is very peaceful. Of the 600 burials here, **12 are Canadians**. They are in Plot 4, Row A.

Near Bolsena, at Orvieto is the **ORVIETO WAR CEMETERY** Of the 188 burials here, **3 are Canadians**.

This would be a separate trip from Rome: The **MORO RIVER CANADIAN WAR CEMETERY** near Ortona. (Note map search shows: “Ortona Canadian War Cemetery” with an address of SS16, 66028 San-Donato-Moro, but address on CWGC website is Contrada San Donato, 66028 Ortano Porto). This area was the scene of many deadly battles, as the Allies to break through the German’s winter defense line. A large majority of the burials in this large and memorable cemetery are Canadians. Of the 1,615 total burials, **1,375 are Canadians**. This is a sad and special place - highly recommend the visit.