

35 - 36

rome - ignatian

3,4 km

Being a pilgrim is embracing uncertainty and finding peace along the way.

Step 35

Interesting facts

Ignatian Tips

Comments

Step 35

We finish this Ignatian Way extended from Spain with a reference to certain Ignatian places in Rome, which deserve a visit by Ignatian pilgrims. We offer a short itinerary, which recalls the arrival of St. Ignatius and the first Jesuits to the city of Rome, with the possibility of visiting some places.

We start the tour on foot in Piazzale Flaminio (Flaminio Square), to contemplate from outside the Porta del Popolo, entrance to Piazza del Popolo, and door through which St. Ignatius and the first companions entered in 1537, coming from La Storta. It was through this gate that Francis Xavier sj left on March 13, 1540, on his way to Portugal and India. The gate was part of the wall of Aurelio, renovated in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

We cross the gate and Piazza del Popolo, to enter Via del Corso, full of stores and people. In 500 m we turn 90 degrees to the left, to continue straight on Via della Croce. In another 400 m, and at the end of Via di S. Sebastianello, we turn left again to enter an alley that leads us to a gate at the entrance to the Generalate of the Congregation of the Resurrection, in Via di S. Sebastianello 11. From here, we retrace our steps to Piazza di Spagna (Spanish Steps) and approach the Fontana della Barcaccia, in front of the baroque steps of Trinità dei Monti.

We continue along Via dei Condotti 400 m to Via del Leoncino, which we take on

the left. Continue straight on Via di Campo Marzio and when you reach Piazza del Parlamento, turn right onto Via dei Prefetti until you reach the small Piazza di Firenze. Turn left into Via Metastasio and you will reach Piazza in Campo Marzio. We cross and continue only 30 m along Via degli Uffici del Vicario, because we turn right into a narrow street: Vicolo della Guardiola. The street ends soon, and we turn left to follow Via del Collegio Capranica. We reach Piazza Capranica and on the corner of the square opposite to where we are, you can see the orphanage that Ignatius founded, next to the entrance of the church of Santa Maria in Aquiro.

We enter the narrow street Vicolo della Spada d'Orlando, next to the orphanage. In 80 m we turn left to continue along Via delle Piste. At the end of the street, turn left into Via del Seminario, which leads to Piazza S. Ignazio, where we find the church of the same name. We leave the church and turn right into the first street we come to and turn right into Via del Collegio Romano. We arrive at Piazza del Collegio Romano, a Jesuit university institution par excellence.

In front of the main gate of the Collegio Romano begins the Via della Gatta, which we follow to the bustling Via del Plebiscito, with the Museo Nazionale del Palazzo Venezia. In this 15th century palace, summer residence of the Popes, Ignatius had several audiences and in 1540 Paul III gave his oral approval for the foundation of the Society of Jesus. We follow the direction of traffic for 200 m and go around the church of the Gesù, site of the remains of St. Ignatius and other notable tombs, such as that of Fr. Arrupe and holy relics such as that of St. Francis Xavier.

We go out and turn to our left. In only 50 m you will find the entrance to the rooms of San Ignacio.

Again, we recommend using Google Maps or another application that reads the GPX that we offer here on the web. End of pilgrimage... and, happy return home!

Interesting facts

All information about Ignatian Rome can be found on this website:
<https://itinerari-ignaziani.net/>

We highlight some of the places that are in the described itinerary.

The first three Jesuits, Ignatius, Laínez and Faber, arrived in Rome in November 1537. The following April they were joined by the other companions. They presented themselves to Paul III to receive the «mission» from him, ready to travel to any part of the world at his direction. The Pope kept them in Rome, and in September 1540 approved the new Institute, which took the official name of «Society of Jesus». From then on, Rome became the central seat of the Order and St. Ignatius, elected general, never left the city. From Rome, while writing the Constitutions, he directed the incredible expansion of the Society throughout the world. In Rome he founded the first great works destined to the service of the Universal Church. In Rome he preached, gave spiritual exercises, formed the first generations of Jesuits, exercised charity and taught catechism to the poorest. From Rome he sent more than six thousand letters to Jesuits, religious and lay people. Upon his arrival he stayed in poor quarters next to the small church of Santa Maria della Strada, changing houses five times, always rented, until the final one next to the Gesù, where he lived for the last 12 years of his life. He founded the Roman College for the preparation of young Jesuits for the service of the Church and the Germanic College, to provide apostles to send to the Lutheran countries.

1.- General House of the Congregation of the Ressurrectionists: Via di San Sebastiano, 11.

Owned by Quirino Garzoni, this was the first house of the companions in Rome. Ignatius lived there, first with Pedro Fabro and Diego Laínez (November 1537 – April 1538) and then with all the companions (from April to June 1538). The lower floor and the cave in the entrance courtyard on the right, above which you can still see the Garzoni coat of arms: a black eagle on a red rose, date from the time of St. Ignatius. Ignatius left here every day to give the Spiritual Exercises at the same time to several practitioners, so far apart from each other that one lived near Santa Maria Maggiore and another near Ponte Sixtus (6.5 km away). While the early Fathers lived here, the followers of Augustine Mainardi, an Augustinian preacher who later abandoned his order and founded a Protestant church, unleashed a persecution against them, accusing them of being Lutherans in disguise and of having been tried in Spain, Paris and Venice for their immoral lives and heresies. Friends of the Jesuits began to move away from them out of fear. Some candidates also abandoned their vocation, such as the Parisian master Lorenzo Garcia, even though Ignatius had a long conversation with him in the

cave mentioned above, in the entrance garden of the house; he would later recognize his mistake. Cardinal de Cupis advised Quirino Garzoni to evict the Fathers from his house, and Garzoni ordered the gardener to keep an eye on them, but he replied that they were holy men, that even if provided with beds, they always slept on the floor on mats [in the style of the Paris students] and that when they received food, they distributed it among the poor. In 1609 Quirino Garzoni's son sold the house and the estate to the Collegio Romano, which remained the owner until the 18th century.

2.- Palazzo Firenze: Piazza di Firenze, 27.

Cardinal Rodolfo Pio Carpi, the great protector of the nascent Society, lived in this house, although his family also owned a house in Campo Marzio. In this house Ignatius often came to meet the cardinal. On February 24, 1544, he wrote in his diary: «Then, going down the street, Jesus appeared to me, and I heard great emotion and tears. After speaking with Cardinal Carpi, when I returned, I again felt great devotion».

3.- Church of Santa Maria in Aquiro and Orphanage: Piazza Capranica.

St. Ignatius saw to it that an orphanage for poor boys and girls was established near this church. The orphanage (1539-1542), whose entrance was in the building next to the church, with the title «Istituto de S. Maria in Aquiro», was dedicated not only to orphans, but also to the homeless beggars of the city. Years later the boys continued to reside here, while the girls were transferred to the monastery of the Quattro Santi Coronati. As was customary in the way of St. Ignatius, a congregation or lay association ran the administration and management of the house. The same association took charge in June 1542, to collect the city's beggars and place them in various hospitals and nurseries. Leo XII (1823-1829) suppressed this association and entrusted the work of orphaned children to the Somascan Fathers.

4.- Church of St. Ignatius: Piazza de Sant'Ignazio.

On the land now occupied by this church, there was the house of Cardinal Gian Pietro Carafa, who on May 23, 1553, was elevated to the chair of St. Peter with the name of Paul IV. Cardinal Carafa was very opposed to Ignatius and was unwilling to help in the founding of the Society. As Fr. Gonzalo de Camara reports, when Ignatius heard the news of his election it was as if all the bones in

his body were disjointed. But, without saying anything, he went into the chapel to pray, and soon after came out looking so calm and cheerful, as if the election of the new Pope had gone according to his wishes. Paul IV, however, did not modify the Constitutions of the Society in the remaining years of St. Ignatius' life.

The Church of St. Ignatius was built in 1626 as a church for the students of the adjacent «Collegio Romano», the Jesuit institution of higher education in Rome. The architect was the Jesuit mathematician Orazio Grassi. Much of the interior decoration was done by the Jesuit brother Andrea Pozzo beginning in 1685. The painting of the central vault represents through an «optical illusion» an open sky with an architecture that gives the impression that heaven and earth are unified. It is the definition of prayer that Pozzo gives through an image.

In the geometric center of the nave, we recognize Christ carrying the Cross. From it comes a ray of light that reaches the chest of St. Ignatius and through it is divided into four rays that reach the four continents found in the four corners of the Church. It is an allegory of the mission of the Society of Jesus, which spreads the light of Christ to the four corners of the world. The numerous flames represented in the fresco refer to the fire of the spirit that descends to earth in a new Pentecost. They also allude to the name of Saint Ignatius (from the Latin «Ignis»). It is not by chance that on both sides of the vault we read the verse from Luke 12:49: «I have come to set the world on fire, and I wish it were already on fire». To this day, Jesuits refer to their mission as «a fire that kindles other fires».

Next to the vault, Pozzo designs the famous false dome painted on a two-dimensional canvas that deceives the viewer. The altar is formed by four pendentives in which weak characters from the Old Testament are represented, so that their fragility becomes an instrument of God who saves his people, such as David against Goliath, Samson or Judith.

The side altars of the transept are dedicated to the devotion of the Jesuit saints who studied at the Roman College. On the left is buried John Berchmans, known for his ability to find the Lord in the ordinary situations of his life. He embodies the final grace of the Spiritual Exercises: «to seek and find God in all things». The altar on the right is dedicated to St. Aloysius Gonzaga, a young Jesuit in formation who, during his theological years, assisted the plague-stricken and himself contracted the illness that led to his death.

In the apse there is an allegory of the death of Ignatius, in the presence of all the poor of the city of Rome whom Ignatius had assisted. He called the poor «the best friends of the eternal King». It is they, and not other great works, that take Ignatius to heaven. The architectural background of this image of the apse recalls the famous fresco of the «school of Athens» that Raphael Sanzio had painted almost two centuries earlier in the «Stanze del Vaticano». But in the church of St. Ignatius, instead of the philosophers that Raphael places on the stairs and in the monumental arches, we see the poor of Rome. The image seems to suggest that they are the real «philosophers». They were the real «teachers» of Ignatius.

5.- Church of Santa Marta: Plaza del Colegio Romano, 3.

Here was the house founded by Ignatius for penitent prostitutes (1543-44). A congregation or association of lay people took care of the administration and entrusted the house to a qualified and experienced woman to run it. Father Ignatius reserved only the spiritual direction. In 1545 Isabel Roser, a benefactress of Ignatius in Barcelona, took over the management of the house. Isabel, after obtaining special pontifical authorization, in December of the same year made her solemn profession of religious vows as a female Jesuit at the hands of Father Ignatius himself; a year later, however, she found it necessary to obtain a dispensation from the Pope from her vows and the termination of Roser's relationship with the Society of Jesus. Fr. Ribadeneira describes Fr. Ignatius as saying that he went to this house in Santa Marta followed by some of those women he had redeemed from vice: «It was pointed out to him [Ignatius] that some of these women, already hardened and habituated to all kinds of vices, easily returned to the former life, so that there was no need to expend so much commitment in converting them, the Father replied: 'Nothing at all. If with all my effort and care I could persuade one of them, for just one night, to abstain from sin for the love of our Lord Jesus Christ, I would not omit any effort because, at least for this once, she would not offend God, even if I knew that afterwards she would return to her old habits.» In 1552 Father Polanco estimated that there were already more than 300 women who had abandoned prostitution.

6.- Venice Palace: Venice Square.

A resting place for the popes since the 15th century. In this building is proclaimed the approval of the Society of Jesus in 1540 and also here is promulgated the papal brief approving the Spiritual Exercises for the entire Catholic Church.

Crossing the arch of the entrance door, to have an audience with the Pope, would be something repeated in the Roman years of St. Ignatius.

7.- The Church of Gesù: Piazza del Gesù.

It is the Mother Church of the Jesuits, built in 1568, that is, 12 years after the death of St. Ignatius. The founder had insisted that the order should not take his name («Ignatians») but be called Jesus: a society of Jesus. That is why the church is dedicated to the name of Jesus. The name is represented in many parts of the church with the monogram of Christ, «IHS». IHS stands for «Iesus Hominum Salvator» (Jesus Savior of Man). IHS also denotes the first three characters of Jesus' name in Greek.

In insisting on the «name of Jesus,» the Jesuits refer to a tradition of the first Christians. For them, the name of Jesus is already a prayer, and its frequent repetition would become in the Christians of the East «a prayer of the name» also known as «prayer of esichasm» (peace of heart). In the late Middle Ages, it was St. Bernard of Siena who popularized the prayer with the use of the acrostic IHS. The Jesuits wanted to present this prayer as a direct relationship with God, who can be called «by name» and with whom one can converse «as a friend talks with a friend,» according to the phrase of St. Ignatius written in the Spiritual Exercises.

The IHS is present on the façade of the church and is repeated in the center of the fresco on the vault, painted by the Genoese artist Baciccia around 1672. The fresco proposes an illusion of an open sky where the IHS coincides with the shape of the Eucharistic Host as a source of light for all. In other words, the intimacy of God that allows to be called by his first name can be experienced particularly in the Eucharist. This intimacy eliminates all distance that separates heaven from earth. In fact, beyond the cornice of the open heavens, seven vices are represented that divide heaven from earth and are expelled by the light emitted by the Eucharistic name of Jesus.

In the dome, Baciccia depicts the saints of paradise, one of them, on the left side, is recognizable St. Ignatius presented to Christ by St. Peter. On the right is St. Francis Xavier presented to Christ by St. Paul. Paleo-Christian mosaics had already depicted Peter and Paul as intercessors of the saints in Paradise, but in this case, the iconography of St. Ignatius, as General of the Society of Jesus, is

assimilated to that of St. Peter, the first Pope. St. Francis Xavier, on the other hand, the apostle of the distant lands, is compared to the apostle of the Gentile people. In the dome, the two Jesuit saints conclude a vertical itinerary that started from their respective altars towards the sides of the transept. The altar of St. Ignatius preserves the body of the founder, while the altar of St. Francis preserves his arm with which the saint baptized thousands of people in India and the Far East.

Other frescoes by Baciccia that deserve to be observed are those of the Presbytery Arch, in which the name of Jesus is compared to a «music to listen to», and that of the Apse, in which the 24 Elders of the Apocalypse present to the slain Lamb the prayers of the faithful in the form of incense. Also worthy of note are the pendentives, in particular the two facing the viewer entering the church and representing respectively the warriors of Israel on the left and the prophets on the right. This is another way of saying that we are in the presence of «Moses and the prophets» or «Moses and Elijah», and, therefore, we are on the Mount of Transfiguration.

The church as a whole conveys a sense of harmony and welcome due to the architectural lines that respect the golden section and also because the Jesuits imposed on the architect a single nave (called «ad aula» church) to facilitate preaching.

8.- The rooms of San Ignacio: Piazza del Gesù, 45.

This is the place where St. Ignatius spent the last years of his life (1544-1556). From here he sent some 7000 letters, mostly to Jesuits all over the world. He, who had traveled extensively through the streets of Europe and for years signed his letters as «the poor pilgrim Ignatius,» continued his interior pilgrimage in this place seeking by all means to do God's will. The letters written in this place always implore God to obtain «the gift of the recognition of his will and the strength to live it». In these rooms Ignatius also wrote the Constitutions of the Society of Jesus.

Ignacio slept and worked in the smaller room. From the window of this room or from another window near the balcony of the adjoining room, Ignatius prayed with abundant tears contemplating the starry sky. In the larger room he celebrated Mass and received visitors, such as his friend Fr. Faber who arrived

sick from a papal mission in northern Europe on July 17, 1546, and died a few days later, on August 1. In this larger room they had placed a bed for Ignatius, so that the nurse could better attend to him if he needed anything in his last illness, the one that ended his life that July 1556. Here he was «born to heaven» repeating the name of Jesus, as Jesuit Brother Cannizzaro said. His room was transformed into a chapel with a small balcony.

In 1682, the Jesuit brother Andrea Pozzo decorated the exterior corridor of the rooms of St. Ignatius. He is considered the master of «optical illusions», a technique he used extensively to decorate this place. These tricks force the viewer to find the precise point where he can observe the frescoes in full harmony. It is noted that, in order to observe the world from the right perspective, it is necessary to place oneself on the «flower» represented on the floor, between the two «stylized eyes». This flower symbolizes Christ, the only «point of view» and the only Truth. If we are outside this point, we see the whole picture distorted. Only from Jesus can we contemplate the world as it is.

The visit to the rooms of St. Ignatius (Camarette di Sant'Ignazio) takes place in the afternoons:

Summer schedule (April – October):

- Monday to Saturday: from 16:00 to 18:00.
- Sundays and holidays: from 10:00 to 12:00 and from 16:00 to 18:00.

Winter schedule (November – March):

- Monday to Saturday: from 15:30 to 17:30.
- Sundays and holidays: from 10:00 to 12:00 and from 15:30 to 17:30.

Free admission. Tel: +39 06 697001. info@chiesadelgesu.org

Ignatian Tips

We approach with reverence these Ignatian places, the churches, and especially the rooms where St. Ignatius lived and died. We wish to feel the presences of so many men and women who, with great devotion, have visited this place and we pray with Ignatius saying:

Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty,
my memory, my understanding,
and my entire will,
All I have and call my own.

You have given all to me.
To you, Lord, I return it.

Everything is yours; do with it what you will.
Give me only your love and your grace,
that is enough for me.

Amen.

This prayer is a beautiful expression of total surrender to God, reflecting the deep spirit of devotion and trust in divine providence that characterized St. Ignatius.

We end with a prayer of St. Claude La Colombière sj (1641-1682), missionary, writer and confessor of St. Margaret Mary Alacoque. *Lord, be the center of our hearts:*

Oh, God, what will you do to conquer
the fearful hardness of our hearts?

Lord, you must give us new hearts,
tender hearts, sensitive hearts,
to replace the marble and bronze cores.

You must give us your own Heart, Jesus.

Come, adorable Heart of Jesus.

Place your Heart in the depths of our hearts.

and kindles in every heart a flame of love

as strong, as great, as the sum of all the reasons I have to love you, my God.

O holy Heart of Jesus,

dwells hidden in my heart,

so that I can live only in you and only for you,

so that, in the end, I may live with you eternally in heaven. Amen.

Final colloquy: Ignatius invites us to deepen our friendship with Jesus. As one friend talks with another, comment with Jesus on the doubts, fears and difficulties you feel within yourself at the end of this Ignatian pilgrimage. Also be grateful and show your joy for all that you now see and understand. Finish by saying goodbye with an Our Father.

Comments

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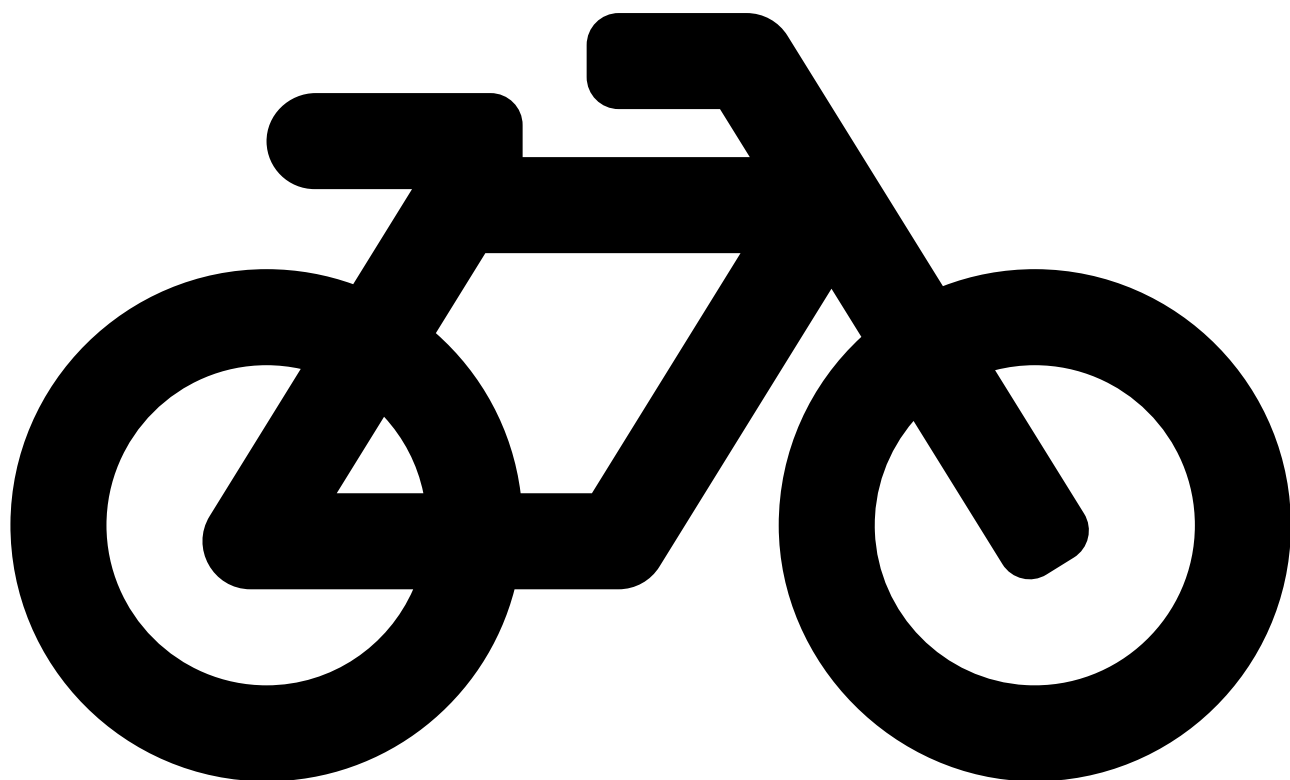
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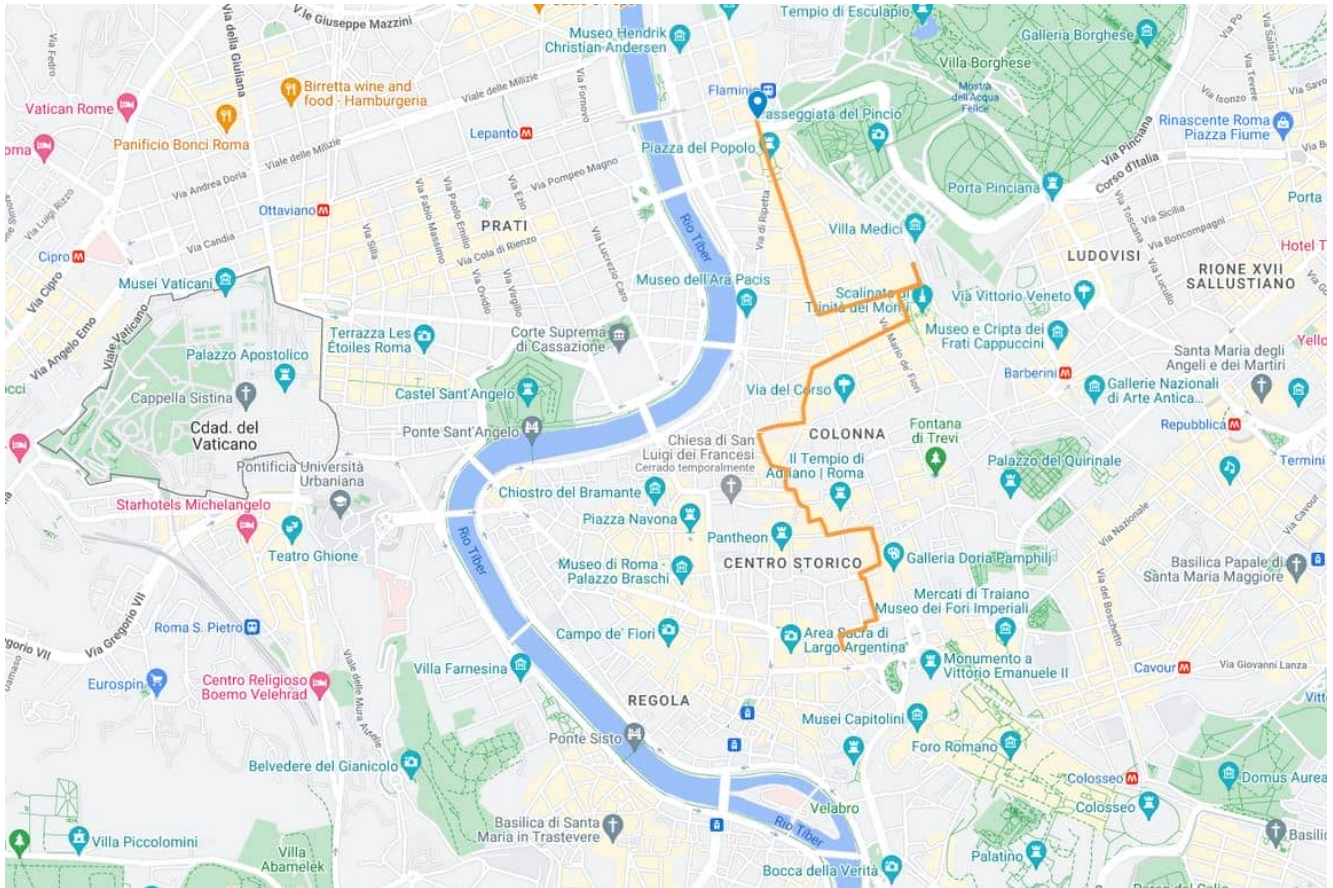
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The entire route can be done by bicycle. Urban route. At the entrance of each basilica you will have to lock your bike.

Trail

Step's sketch



The weather in Rome

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Galery

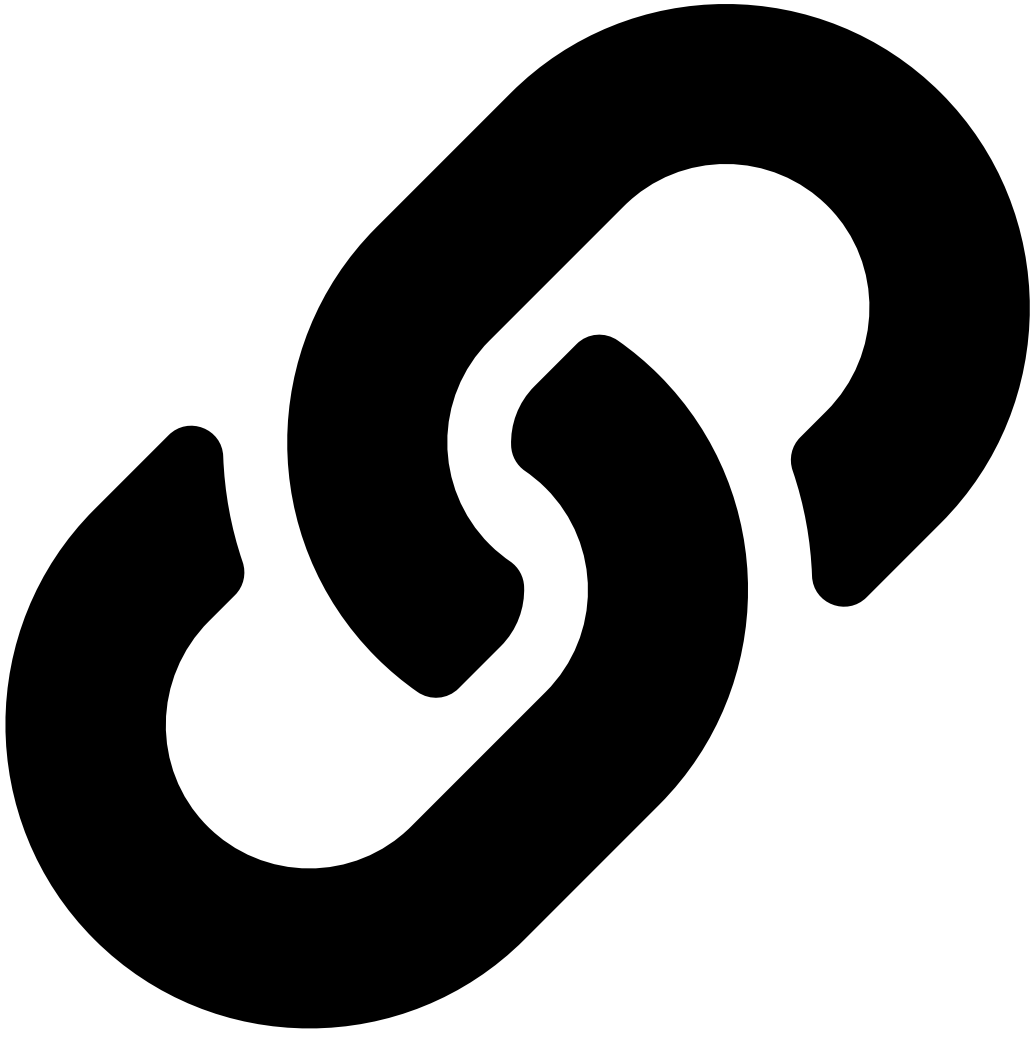
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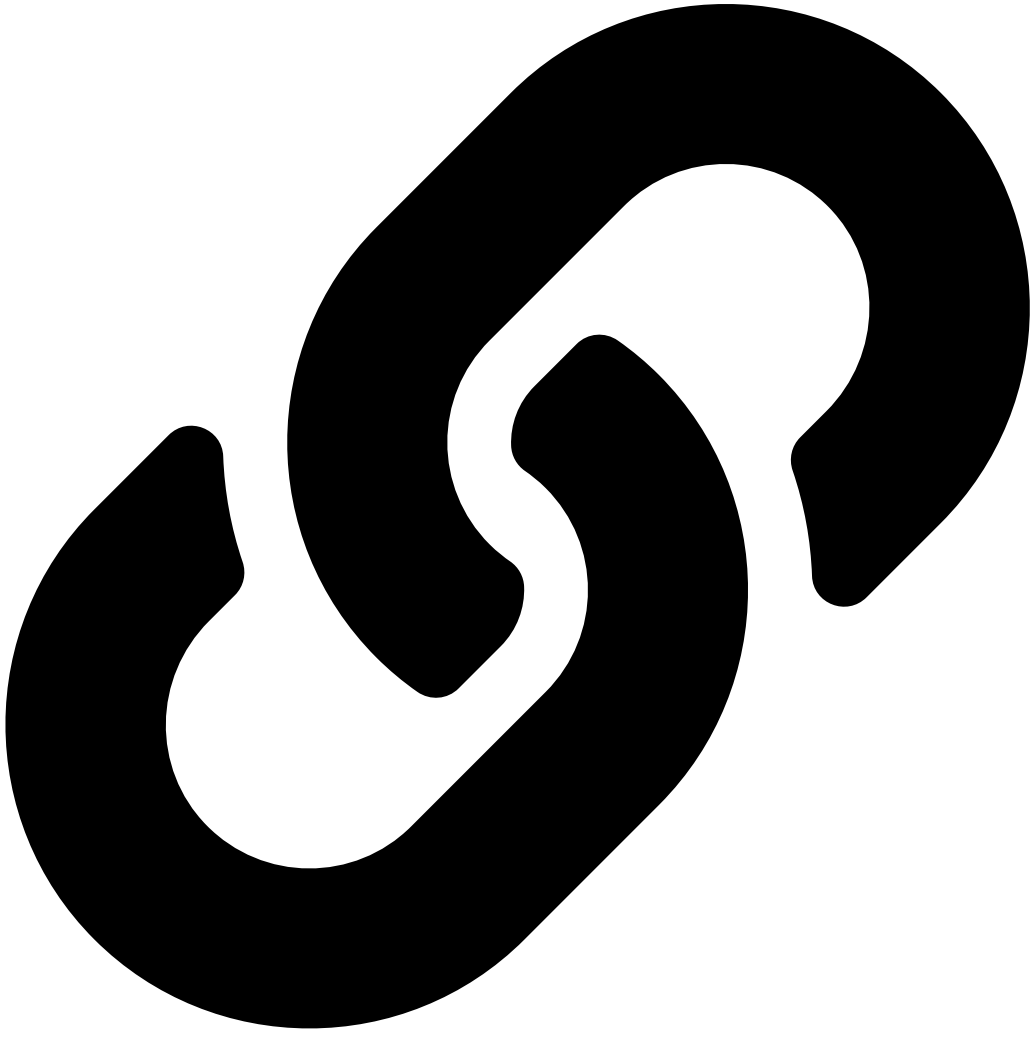


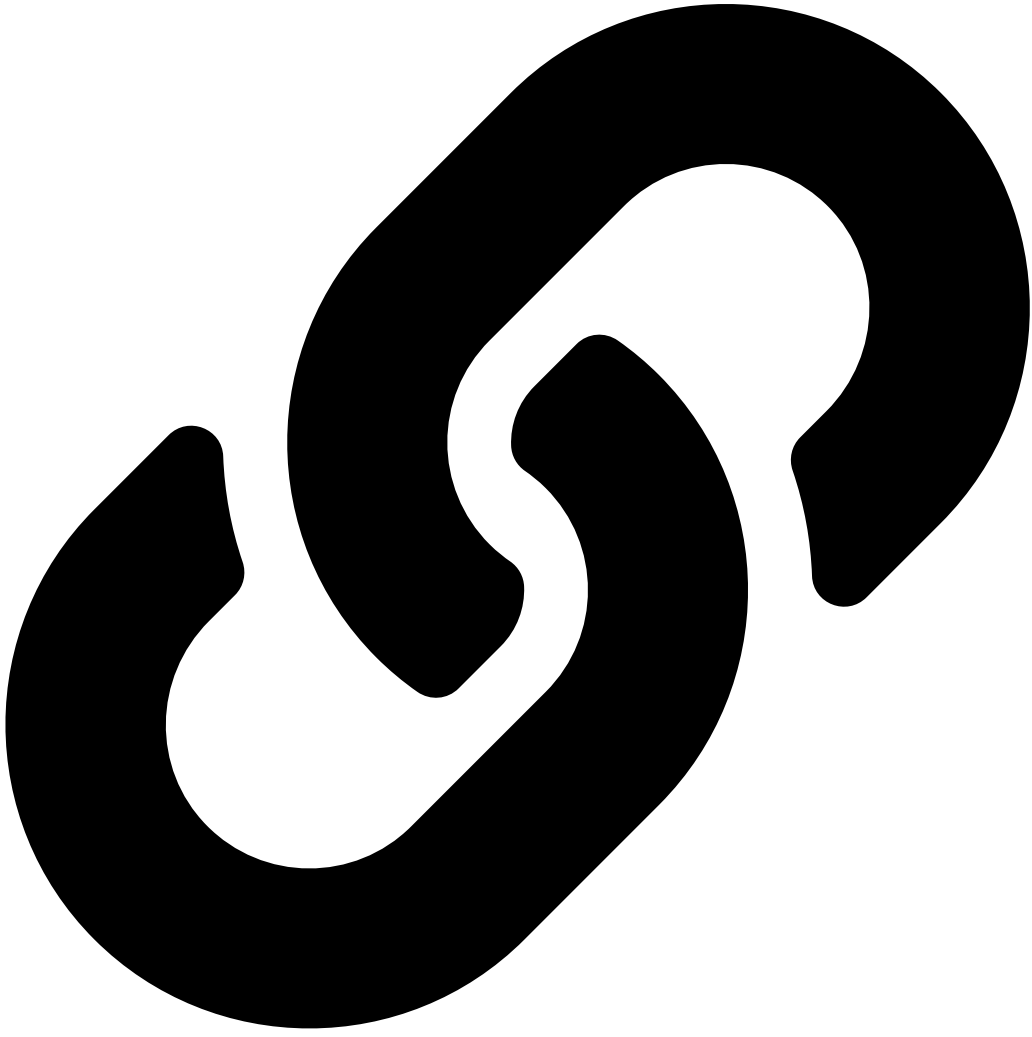




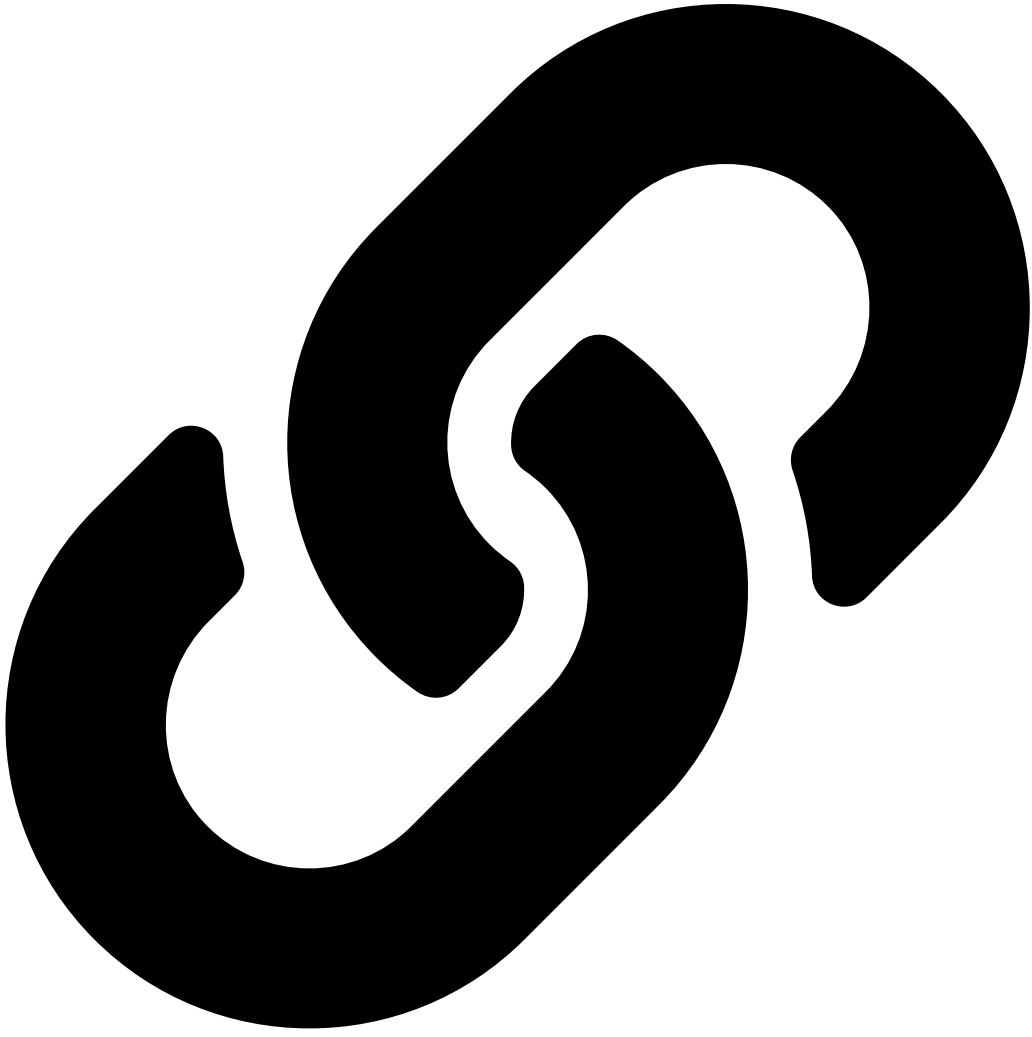






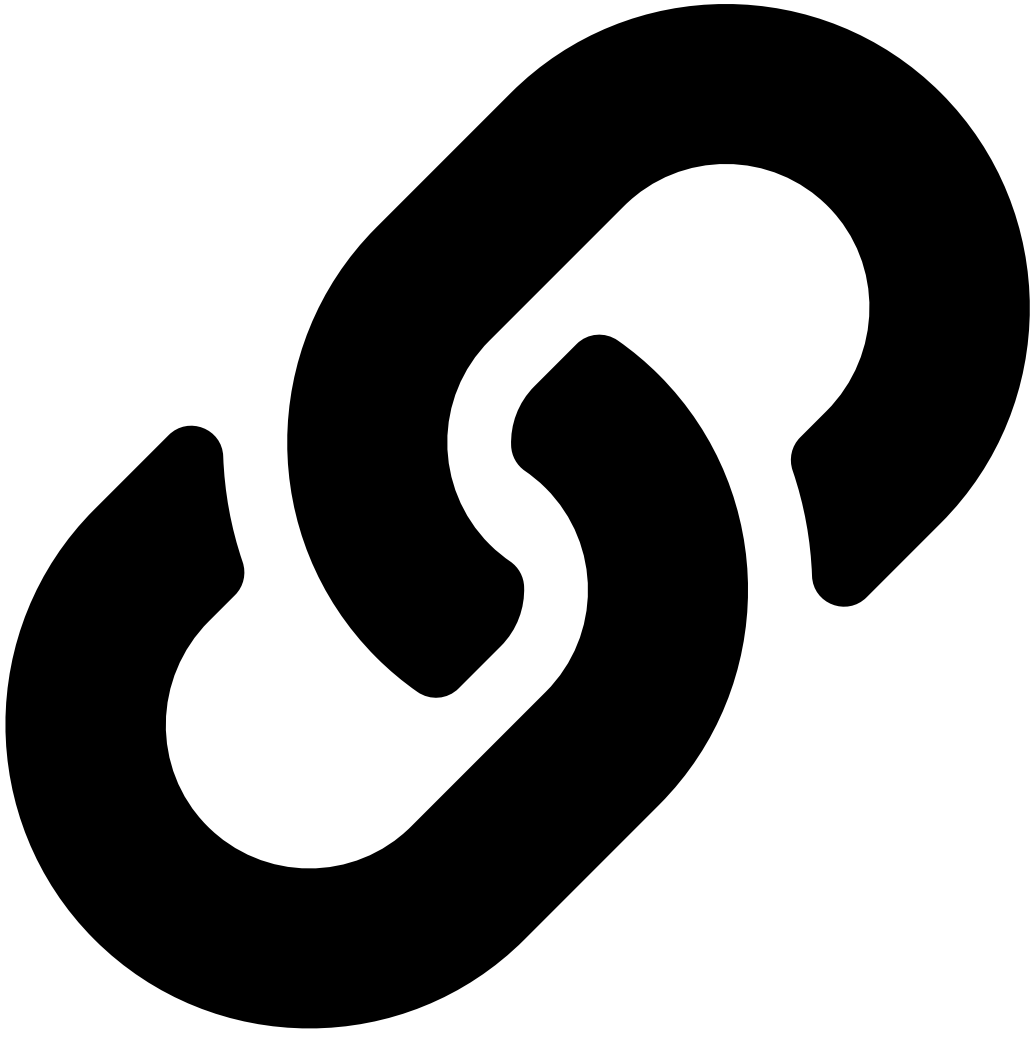




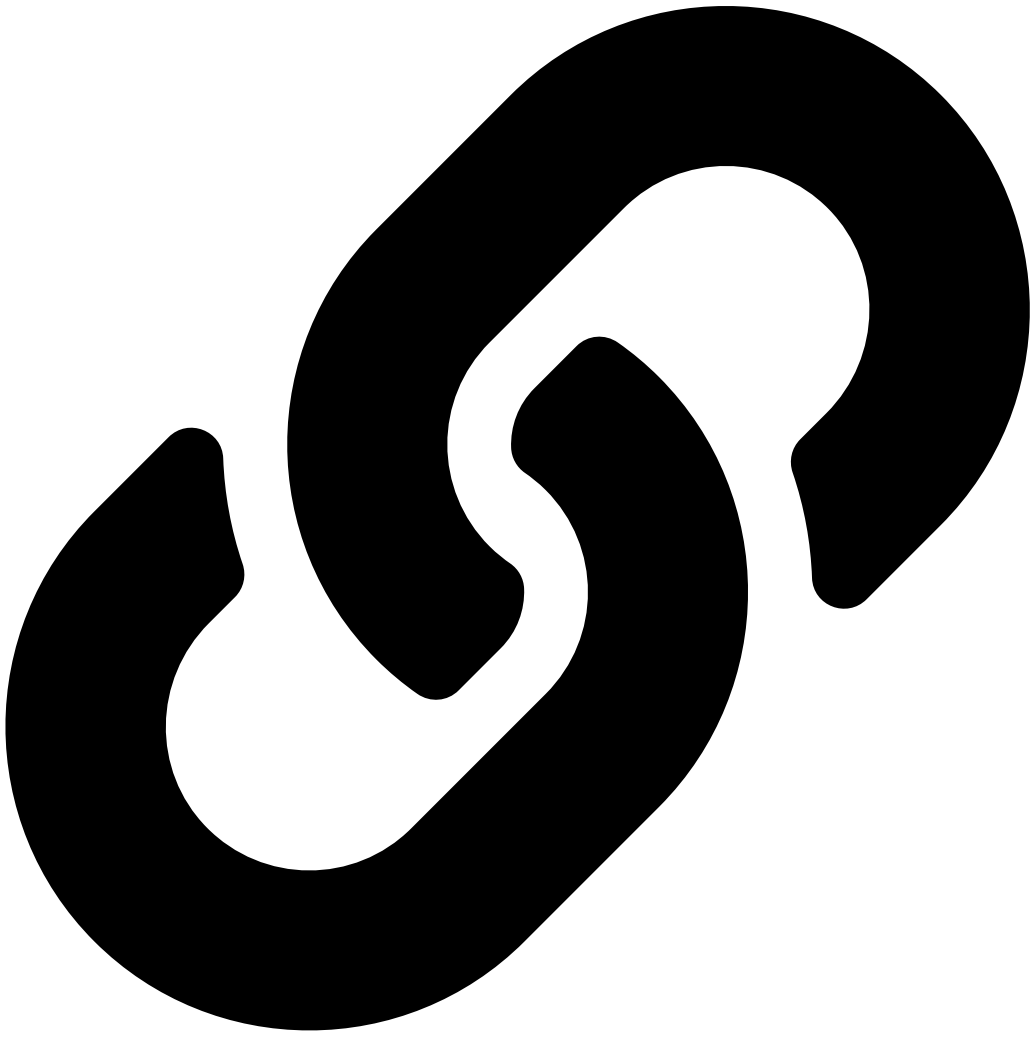


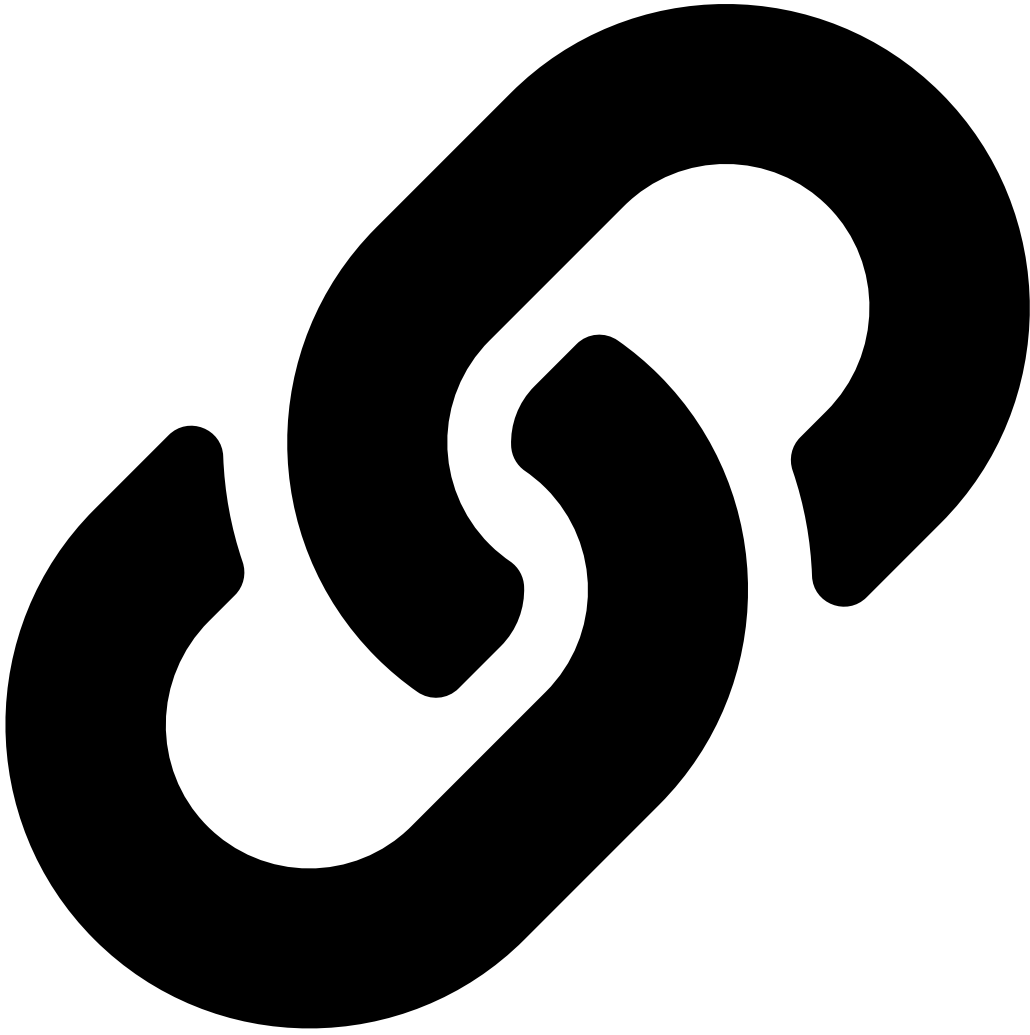












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