

# St. Peters Basilica and St. Peters Square

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The engraving seen below goes by the name of “Veduta de la Basilica e Piazza di San Pietro in Vaticano” and was published in the Book “Vedute di Roma” in the year 1748. It measures 399mm x 541mm.

In this work - by Giovanni Battista Piranesi - we can appreciate the depiction of Saint Peters Basilica and Saint Peters Square, located in Vatican City, still standing today. It is not only a precise and purely analytical showcase of a building but rather a vivid scene in which the buildings are accompanied by groups of several people and also many carriages driving through. The completion of this building site took over a hundred years, starting in 1506 and finding its end in 1626. Donato Bramante was the architect behind this project.

Piranesi uses a great deal of elements to showcase this site. For one he draws the individual elements that are part of the building; the imposing columns, the large windows the domes and even the decorative elements such as statues, and intricate ornaments on the facades. But he also enriches the engraving by using the elements of light and as a result shadow. Even the smallest elements seem to have been carefully drawn so they do not come across as plain silhouettes, but rather bodies with volume. Furthermore this work is defined by the utilization of perspective. With it Piranesi creates a great depth that lets the viewers get a sense for the size and profundity of the square and the Basilica at the very end. What is particularly striking is the use of symmetry. The mirroring axis is the monumental obelisk in the middle of the square, this highlights the facts that Bramante's design was indeed symmetrical. Of course in the picture this symmetry is not flawless, because the buildings surrounding the Basilica and the Square have an arbitrary order. In addition to this the observer is able to perceive the monumental proportions because of people placed all over the square, at the foreground but also in the background, allowing us to grasp the real size of the buildings.

Until this very day the Basilica and the Square have not changed. The construction is in a very good state, all structures are well preserved. And since the immediate surrounds are also in the power of the catholic church no other structure has been erected, that could undermine the presence of it. All in all it is practically identical.

