

BOTTICELLE: WHY IT SHOULD BE ABOLISHED

“Botticelle” is the Roman name that refers to horse-drawn carriages used for tourism. They can be seen every day on the busiest streets of Rome, in the center of the capital, taking tourists to the major sights. In an age when there were no motorized vehicles, horse-drawn carriages were used to transport goods in “barrels” – an outdated mode of transporting goods and people. It is a word that no longer has relevance.

Horse-drawn carriages for tourism (Botticelle) are a relatively new phenomenon in Rome, which does not have a history of transporting tourists in this manner.



There is no longer a need to justify the use of animals for transporting goods or people. In present day Rome, there are many options for tourists to get around such as taxis, buses, tour buses, subways – and walking. If you are able, walking is preferred because you can do it at your own pace and see what you want to see.



Rome is a bustling city with chaotic, heavy and noisy traffic conditions in which the horses are forced to work – pulling their unsafe, heavy (over 800 kg) and slow moving carriages through this congestion. They are gentle animals who can spook and bolt at the slightest provocation causing accidents, which have resulted in the death of the horse, the carriage occupants, and passersby.

The horses also walk uphill, which is particularly difficult especially for arthritic horses. The streets in many parts of Rome are paved with unlevel stones, which can be slippery and uncomfortable for the horse. In Rome’s very hot summers, the high temperature of the asphalt becomes unbearable.

The prime concern of the drivers is to make money and they often do so at the expense of the horse’s welfare, disregarding the law, which is generally not enforced -- Article 46 of the Regulations of the City of Rome for the Protection of Animals.

Drivers are often seen accepting more passengers than allowed by law, working in the afternoon during the summer (1pm to 5pm or 1300 to 1700 hours), running the horse at a trot, working more than six hours a day – all violations of the law. They also charge what they please up to \$300 per trip.

In June and November of 2008, two horrendous accidents involving carriage horses occurred in which both horses were killed.

This is a business that must be banned. It endangers both people and horses.

For more information about the campaign to ban botticelle in Rome, contact Giovanna Di Stefano by email at: giodis.z@gmail.com