

POMPEII and HERCULANEUM FINAL SCRIPT

INTRODUCTION

Mount Vesuvius erupted almost 2000 years ago. The inhabitants of nearby Pompeii and Herculaneum suffered horrific deaths, before being buried beneath tonnes of volcanic rock. For centuries their story was forgotten, their existence erased. However, during the last 400 years, their secrets have slowly been unearthed, giving us a remarkable insight into an ancient culture.

POMPEII and HERCULANEUM – Cities of Vesuvius Main title

Pompeii and Herculaneum were founded by the Oscans around 800 BC, and later were influenced by the Greek colonies in the Campania region. The Etruscans and Greeks dominated until the Samnites took possession of most of this area, uniting Campania. Pompeii became more Italic in character, relinquishing the last traces of Hellenistic influence. In 80 BC, after a war against Rome, the Samnites surrendered Pompeii, and from then on its history was linked to Rome.

GEOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT Chapter heading

The Roman name for Pompeii was ***Colonia Cornelia Veneria Pompeiorum***, meaning The Colony of the Pompeians, set up under the auspices of ***Sulla*** (the patron) and ***Venus*** (the goddess) in 80 BC. Ancient tradition connected the name Herculaneum with the Greek hero Herakles or ***Hercules*** in Latin and consequently in Roman mythology.

Located 200 kilometres south of Rome is the Bay of Naples. This was a playground for the rich and privileged, who built luxurious villas on its sun drenched shores.

Pompeii is located 22 kilometres south east of Naples, 14 kilometres from Mount Vesuvius. The city was 500 metres from the coast, but after the eruption and the resulting lava flow, the coastline was pushed out into the sea. Pompeii ended up two and a half kilometres inland from the new coastline.

The natural bay and the Sarno River provided a suitable port for shipping. The Sarno River also supplied Pompeii with water, which was stored in a reservoir above the city. The fertile volcanic soil was perfect for farming. Hot springs nearby was piped to the city for use in the public baths. Pompeii had been the centre of trade in southern Campania for six hundred years.

The way historians view Pompeii and Herculaneum geographically is based on the archaeologist Giuseppe Fiorelli's method of dividing up the site. Excavation of the site has revealed that Pompeii was a planned city, covering an area of sixty-seven hectares. A regular grid pattern of streets was based on two main streets – Via dell'Abbondanza, and Via Stabiana. The streets varied from two to four and a half metres wide with raised footpaths. Rainwater and sewerage flowed away along ruts in the streets. The ruts left by these carts remain etched in the large cobblestones. Stepping-stones allowed pedestrians to cross the road without getting their feet wet, and slowed down horse-drawn carts.

Each block bordering the streets was called an *insulae*. Within each insulae would be found houses, shops, taverns, workshops, and rented flats. There were one hundred and seventeen of these insulae. A three-kilometre wall made of volcanic tufa borders the city, divided by eight fortified gates. Watchtowers were placed on top of the wall. Outside the city walls, wealthy citizens built villas overlooking the ocean.

At the time of the eruption, the population was estimated at twenty thousand.

Herculaneum is closer to Naples, located on a volcanic plateau south-west of Mount Vesuvius. Two streams supplied water to the city. It had a population of about five thousand people, in an area of twenty-two hectares.

Herculaneum was not a large manufacturing or trading centre, containing mostly residences, and was a resort for wealthy Romans. The town is divided by five main roads: Cardo 111, Cardo 1V and Cardo V. and Decumanus Maximus and Decumanus Inferior. There was an underground sewer beneath the roads, sending waste and rainwater out to sea, with no need for pedestrian stepping-stones. Roads and footpaths were made with mosaic chips cemented into their surfaces.

THE FORUM Chapter heading

The Forum was the centre of all aspects of life in both Pompeii and Herculaneum. Public buildings clustered around the **Forum** or the **Fora**, which was the centre of political, economic, social, civic and religious life. The Forum of Herculaneum, unfortunately, is still buried under the modern town of Resina, out of the reach of archaeologists.

The Forum in Pompeii however, has been completely excavated, revealing an open rectangular area of about six hundred and twenty square metres, paved

in limestone. It was crowded, busy and noisy and was a meeting place to catch up with the latest news and gossip.

For the people of Pompeii and Herculaneum, religion, as in other ancient societies, was paramount in their lives.

The Temple of Jupiter, or the **Capitolium**, dominated the Pompeian Forum. It housed the Capitoline triad of Gods; Jupiter, protector of the state, Juno, protector of women, and Minerva, patroness of craftsmen. This was the centre of state religion.

The Temple of Apollo was, at one time, the most important temple in the Forum. Apollo, the sun god, and his sister Diana, the goddess of the hunt were two of the traditional Roman gods worshipped.

Across the other side of the Forum is The Temple of Vespasian (originally named the Temple of the Genius of Augustus). It was built during the reign of Emperor Augustus in the first century AD. This celebrated the Imperial cult, and housed statues of past and present Roman emperors. It was restored after the earthquake of AD 62 and contains the Alter of Emperor Vespasian, which depicts an Imperial sacrificial relief. Located next to the Temple of Vespasian, is the Temple of Lares. This contained the Sanctuary of the city's Lares, which is the spirit of the family and city.

The Roman legal and political system was the other guiding force in their society. The **Fora** in both cities included public buildings devoted to them.

The **Basilica** was originally a market, but it is thought that it contained law courts. It included offices and shops, and served as an exchange where businessmen could meet clients, tradesmen or friends. Orators could also deliver speeches here.

At the southern end of the Forum were three government offices. One contained the offices of two lesser magistrates, or **Aediles** who were elected annually. They were in charge of maintaining public buildings, roads, water supplies, sanitation, and public baths. They also organised and financed all public games.

Two chief magistrates or **Duovirs** who were also elected annually occupied the second. They tried cases and presided over the Council and elections. The city council of one hundred members was in the last government office. The councillors were called **Decurions**, and chosen from the most distinguished citizens. They were elected for life.

The city's chief market was the **Macellum**, which was held every Saturday.

The Building of Eumachia served as a guild or union hall for cloth makers, dyers and traders who were known as fullers. It contained showrooms for goods, meeting halls and workrooms.

THE ECONOMY Chapter heading

Pompeii was the major trading centre and port for Campania for over 600 years. Goods were traded to and from many regions of the Mediterranean. Imports included wine from Greece, and pottery and glassware from Alexandria. The sea provided an income source, both from the sale of fish, and supplying garum (a fish sauce). Pottery, tiles and garum were exported throughout the Roman Empire.

Pompeii's rich volcanic soils were excellent for agriculture, producing grains, olives and grapes. Farms were owned by wealthy landowners, but worked by slaves. Honey, onions and herbs thrived in the town gardens. Wine and olive oil was manufactured, and in Pompeii there were many factories producing woollen textiles

The Macellum, located in the Forum, was the city's central market which was held every Saturday. Fresh produce from local farms was sold both in temporary stalls and permanent shops. Peddlers roamed the streets hawking whatever they could, while luxury imported goods could be bought in specialty shops. There would have been as many as 600 shops in Pompeii.

In both cities there was uniformity in measurement and currency. Alongside the western colonnade of the Forum in Pompeii can be seen the **Mensa Ponderaria**, a stone measuring table. This was used together with a set of weights and measures to set the standards for commerce. A small silver coin, the **Sesterce** was used to purchase goods. Evidence of economic activity at Pompeii and Herculaneum include wall paintings, or *frescoes*, workshops and artefacts, providing an insight into their various industries and occupations.

Located among houses comprising the *insulae* were important businesses. These included bakers, launderers and cloth dyeing. The remains of one of the largest bakeries was found in Pompeii.

Excavated were mills for grinding grain into flour, and a huge brick oven containing 81 loaves of carbonised bread. At Pompeii 28 bakeries have been found in all and graffiti of a shopping list indicates that bread was a daily item.

The Building of Eumachia within the Forum at Pompeii was a guildhall for cloth makers, dyers and traders known as fullers. A fullery was a place where cloth was dyed and laundered. The famous Fullery of Stephanus in Pompeii was a laundry installed in a dwelling on the Via dell' Abbondanza. At the entrance was a machine for pressing tunics. The basin in the atrium was used for washing the fabrics. At the rear of the building, what had been the *peristyle*, or courtyard, now contained basins for urine and other liquids used in the dyeing process. In the smaller basins to the left slaves pressed the cloth with their feet. For urine collection, pots were placed outside the fullery and on street corners for passers-by to use. The Emperor Vespasian even taxed it.

Inscriptions, graffiti, mosaics and artefacts indicate many professions. This fresco from the House of the Vetti in Pompeii portrays cupids as goldsmiths. Actors, musicians and gladiators are depicted. The city also boasted doctors and dentists, (who were often slaves or freedmen), merchants and bankers. The House of the Surgeon in Pompeii takes its name from nearly forty bronze and iron surgical instruments, including pliers and forceps, found in it.

The remains of an unbelievable number of hot food bars or Thermopoliums and taverns have been found in both Pompeii and Herculaneum. The **Thermopolium** sold hot food and drinks which were stored in jars (**dolia**) in the masonry desk. It was like a present day cafe comprising one room opening onto the road, with sometimes a back room to sit and eat. They have been located in every insulae and served those who had no kitchen in their own homes. Traders and merchants, visitors from neighbouring towns, and country folk who came to the city to sell their produce also frequented these establishments. When this Thermopolium on Via dell' Abbondanza was excavated, the day's earnings, 683 sesterces, was discovered in a jar under the counter. On the wall is depicted the Genius or advising spirit of the household and the owner of the shop, flanked by the Lara; the spirit of the family, offering libations to the gods. Below are painted two serpents, a symbol of fertility and procreative power.

Taverns or **Taberna** were different to the Thermopoliums, and the Large Taberna in Herculaneum is fine example.

It also had a bench with jars built into it, and shelves stored containers for serving food and drink. In the back of the building was a space for tables, where patrons would eat and drink, as well as gamble, a popular pastime. Accommodation was available in two small rooms connected to the rear of the tavern.

Evidence suggests that people were in no way prudish, with prostitution a thriving, legal industry.

In Pompeii, sex was not limited to the marital bed and it was not uncommon for men to visit brothels, called **Lupanare** or 'lairs of the she or he wolves'. There remains to this day a phallic symbol etched into a cobblestone pointing the way to the nearest one. No brothels have been uncovered in Herculaneum, but of the nine found in Pompeii, this one is the best preserved. There were ten rooms on two floors. The ones on the ground floor had beds made of stone, upon which mattresses were placed. Various erotic paintings on the walls advertised the particular specialities of the women. Most prostitutes were freed slaves or foreigners, who used exotic names. Where they operated depended on social class. High-class courtesans were paid well and therefore lived and associated with clients in lavish surroundings. Poorer prostitutes solicited their clients in archways. Prostitution was seen as such a profitable business that Emperor Caligula put a tax on it.

SOCIAL STRUCTURE Chapter Heading

Society in Pompeii and Herculaneum was well-ordered and routinized, featuring distinct social differences between men and women. The most important relationship was that of the family, followed by the patron/client relationship. In this, the client was supported politically, socially, economically and legally by their patron in return for political support. Homage was the respect shown by clients, usually every morning at the patron's house, and was known as **salutatio**.

Social status for men was according to Roman law, heavily influenced by wealth and family background or official positions. A fresco of a male banqueting scene indicates social standing, with servants and slaves typically depicted as smaller and lower in the picture. There was no definite middle class, with nobles, wealthy landowners and traders dominating local politics. Inscriptions were made on buildings to indicate a family's continued influence on neighbourhood affairs. Craftsmen, artisans, shopkeepers, businessmen and farmers formed a lower class. They belonged to trade guilds controlled by the state but, as freeborn citizens, they could vote for municipal councils. Seating at the theatre also reflected social status. Privileged men, including nobles, sat in front, followed by lower class men and then women. Slaves were in the last level of seating.

Women in these cities were not classed as citizens and had no political rights. Pompeian women were more liberated, and had greater freedom than the women of Rome, and actively participated in public life. Women of the upper class could often own land, have an education, operate businesses and also become priestesses. Education was a symbol of status and respect, although motherhood was considered the most esteemed occupation.

If a woman owned property she had the same rights as a Roman woman. Women were involved in business. There were female innkeepers, weavers, and fruit sellers. Wives of tradesmen were not wealthy and were responsible for managing shops. Daughters of tradeswomen learnt weaving and other domestic skills at home without the benefit of a formal education.

Some women were extremely influential. Advertisements found in Pompeii indicate properties owned by Julia Felix were for rent. She was wealthy and her house occupied an entire insulae. Eumachia was both a businesswoman and a city priestess, who owned a large building in the forum at Pompeii. An inscription indicates she built it with her own money, in honour of Augustan concord and **piety**. She was the patron of the fullers who occupied the building and who erected a statue in her honour.

There was a hierarchy in the households of Pompeii and Herculaneum. The husband or **pater familias** was head of the household, followed by his wife and their children. Lastly were the slaves, who could be doctors, cooks or teachers for the family. Family value was associated with individual importance and piety, a sense of duty to the gods, to one's parents, ancestors, and to country.

Slaves had no rights or privileges, but were more like feudal serfs. In Pompeii and Herculaneum, they constituted 40% of the population. Slaves could be bought and sold and the children of slaves remained slaves. People from all social strata owned them, from wealthy householders to estate owners. By law, slaves were part of one's property. Freedom could be bought, or granted through the patronage of their owner at a ceremony called **manumission**. Many freed slaves continued to work with their masters, but were not entitled to citizenship. The brothers at the Vetti Villa bought their freedom and became part of the elite of Pompeii society, and had great power and influence within the community.

LOCAL POLITICAL LIFE Chapter heading

Pompeii became a Roman colony in 80BC, while Herculaneum was a **municipium** or municipality with its own local government. Because both cities were under Roman influence, their constitutions were based on its system of government.

In Pompeii, only freeborn male citizens over 25 with good moral character could vote. Women and freed slaves could never enter the political spectrum and, like actors and gladiators, were not allowed to vote. Women did, however, have the right to support political candidates with election slogans.

Public notices found in Pompeii indicate a healthy and active community interest in politics. Housing blocks or districts constituted electoral areas.

The Senatorial and the Equestrian classes represented and served the Roman Emperor. For senators, it was a hereditary position, with the requirement to have property valued at 1 million sesterces.

Senators were usually wealthy Romans who visited their villas in Pompeii. They wore a distinguishing toga with a broad purple stripe, while **Equites** were identified by togas with a narrow purple stripe. Equites served the Emperor in important posts such as commanders of fire services and military officers. It was not a hereditary position and was only given to men with property equal to 400,000 sesterces. Pliny the Elder was an equestrian who held the post of naval commander at Misenum. Pliny's nephew, Pliny the Younger, wrote the firsthand accounts of the eruption of Vesuvius.

Elections for councils were held in March, with the one-year term beginning in July. All citizens at the assembly voted. Every five years two officials, called **Quinquennales**, held a census. Quinquennales also had the power to expel counsellors for disgrace or loss of finances.

Ordo decurionum or the Decurion Council was made up of 100 magistrates from the wealthy classes, elected for life. They controlled civic finances, public construction and religion, and the use of weights and measures in the forum.

Four officials, called **Decurions**, were elected to run the town. Two were called **duumviri**, and were senior magistrates. They presided over elections, carried out decrees of the Decurion council, and were in charge of justice and finance. The two junior Decurions were the **Aediles**. They managed the day-to-day running of the town, upkeep of public buildings, water supply, sanitation, street markets and maintained order.

They issued licences and organised and paid for public games. Aediles were unpaid and needed other occupations to pay their employees.

Politics and religion were heavily intertwined, where religious roles became political. The **Augustales** was an imperial cult of freedmen, which afforded its members political power. Membership was purchased; therefore a degree of wealth was required. Located one block away from the Forum in Pompeii is the **Temple of Fortuna Augusta** which housed the Augustales. Marcus Tullius, a city magistrate and son of Cicero the Roman lawyer and famous orator, built the temple on his own land in honour of Emperor Augustus.

Herculaneum was a *municipium* governed by Roman officials, and had a town council which was slightly different to that of Pompeii. Its distinguishing characteristic was self-governance.

EVERYDAY LIFE Chapter heading

Reliefs, sculptures, mosaics, inscriptions and buildings have provided a valuable insight into everyday life in Pompeii and Herculaneum.

Clothing was made from either wool or linen. Local weavers made woollen clothing, while linen came from Egypt. Men wore a loincloth, with a linen shift underneath a tunic, which was belted and reached the knees. The *toga* was worn outdoors by officials and the upper classes, with purple stripes on clothing indicating status. Women, who favoured colourful clothing, wore a shift and a tunic, or *stola*, down to the ankles. Over this, a *palla* covered the head. Both sexes wore sandals or slippers, and jewellery such as rings, necklaces and bracelets. A heavy cloak could be worn in cooler weather. Only slaves or country people wore hats.

Bread was the main food staple, though there was a great deal of fruit and vegetables available. Chicken and seafood were widely consumed, while game birds, lamb and pork were also included in the diet. Meat was heavily spiced to preserve it. Throughout Pompeii, there were over 130 taverns, inns and bars, providing food and drink. Some homes had specific cooking areas, essentially kitchens. Others had a portable tripod for cooking. The wealthy had a dining room, the *triclinum*, named after its 3 couches. Here, slaves served exotic food to the reclining host and his guests. Such a banquet could include three courses. First came the light dishes, called *Gustatio*, which were invariably accompanied by *Mulsum* (a mixture of honey and wine). Next, the diners were served three or more dishes called *Fercula*, this time with wine. The *Mensae Secundae* or dessert was last. The meal was eaten with fingers or a spoon. Tableware was mostly bronze, though some gold and silver pieces have been uncovered.

Research conducted by forensic anthropologist Sarah Bisel on human remains indicates that the inhabitants of Pompeii and Herculaneum were taller than average for the time. This suggests good health and a nutritious diet. However, Bisel's research reveals that, in Herculaneum, the diet contained more seafood and vegetables, with less sugar and red meat.

Both cities had a sophisticated water supply and sanitation system. Aqueducts brought water from the mountains to be stored in reservoirs. The *Castellum Aquae* reservoir was at the highest point of Pompeii at Porta Vesuvio.

Water was distributed through three primary channels, and a system of sluice gates regulated the flow. In Pompeii, 42 public fountains, usually situated on street corners, supplied water for the general population. Underground lead pipes were laid to deliver water to private homes, if paid for by the owners. In both Pompeii and Herculaneum, water was used in toilets located next to where food was prepared. The toilet fed into a pit or sewer in the street. Public toilets, **foricae**, were common. They were rooms with a marble bench containing holes. Privacy here was not considered important. In Pompeii, rain water and sewerage flowed away along ruts in the streets. In Herculaneum, an underground sewer ran beneath the roads, sending sewerage and rainwater to the sea.

A visit to the public baths, or **thermae**, was a regular social event in the daily calendar. The baths opened at midday, allowing the furnaces to be stoked in the morning. Pompeii had four baths: Stabian, Forum, Central and Suburban, while Herculaneum had two: Central and Suburban. A short walk from the Forum in Pompeii is the Forum Baths, which was divided into one for men, and a substantially smaller one for women. These baths had separate entrances. Each had a changing room, the **apodyterium**, a cold room, the **frigidarium**, a warm room, the **tepidarium**, and a hot room, the **caldarium**. Furnaces beneath the floor heated water for the Tepidarium and the Caldarium. A **palaestra** was available for men to exercise, while women had an open air courtyard. An afternoon visit provided the venue for social networking, chatting with friends and conducting business. Patrons would leave their clothing in the niches provided in the change room, like this one in the female section of Herculaneum's Central Baths. From there they would pass into the **Tepidarium** where the water temperature was warm. Next, they entered the **Caldarium**. The Men's section of the Forum baths contained statues, and the walls and ceiling were beautifully decorated. It contained a hot bath fuelled by a furnace beneath the floor. Spaces in the floor, **hypocausts**, also distributed hot air into the room. The ceiling was corrugated, which allowed condensed steam to run down the walls into a channel. This avoided the nuisance of water droplets constantly falling onto patrons. Finally, a plunge into the **Frigidarium** after a hot bath would wash away perspiration and tone up the body.

There was no class system within the baths, with the rich and poor using the facilities together. The Stabian baths in Pompeii had a large swimming pool, and there were also latrines. The baths had libraries and gardens for reading and poetry recitals. Visitors could also practice physical exercise and play sports on the **palaestra** followed by a massage or a bath. Julia Felix, like many other wealthy Pompeians, had her own private baths.

There were many leisure activities available within the cities. Performance art was extremely popular. Wealthy home owners often hired actors to perform private shows during banquets. The Large Theatre in Pompeii accommodated 5,000 people. Entry was free, but a token was required to indicate seating position. Improvisation was popular, as were Atellan Farces, with actors wearing masks as well as presenting mimed skits. Slaves were the first to introduce pantomime. **The Odeion**, was located next to the Large Theatre in Pompeii, and sat 1,300 patrons. They were entertained by dramatic plays, musical concerts and speeches.

The Amphitheatre in Pompeii was enormous and could accommodate up to 20,000 people. Seating was governed by a strict social hierarchy with important citizens occupying the closest levels. Civil and religious festivals were conducted in this arena, but gladiatorial combats and wild beast hunts were the most popular events. Gladiators were divided into four types. **Samnites** were heavily armed with a sword and lance, a metal helmet and a rectangular metal shield. **Myrmills** were identified by a fish symbol on their helmet. **Retiarius** had no armour, carried a trident, and trapped opponents in netting. **Specialists** had daggers and lances. Professional gladiators, slaves and criminals fought these battles to the death.

INFLUENCE OF GREEK AND EGYPTIAN CULTURES

Greek Influence (sub-title)

Pompeii and Herculaneum were originally Greek settlements, and their influence can be seen in art, religion and architecture. Herculaneum is named after Heracles, or Hercules, and inscriptions in both cities indicate that the Greek language was spoken. Romans spoke Latin, but those with an education also spoke Greek.

Greek gods and goddesses Apollo, Hercules, Minerva, Dionysus, Hermes and Demeter were worshipped, and temples were built for this purpose.

Greek influence in architecture was considerable. The simple but impressive Doric design with its plain columns and the capital sitting on top was used throughout the Forum in Pompeii. The Basilica in Pompeii had Ionic columns supporting the roof. These had rings on their bases, and were bulged, making them appear straight even from a distance. Scrolls were added to the capitals. The Temple of Apollo was surrounded by 28 Corinthian columns. This was the most decorative design, with the capitals containing leaves and flowers below a small scroll.

The Large and Odeion Theatres in Pompeii owe their design to Greek influence. As well, Greek-style athletic sports were extremely popular. The Palaestra is modelled on the style of architecture popular after the time of Alexander the Great. Wall paintings imitated Greek panel pictures, while the peristyle garden was copied from the original Greek design.

Egyptian Influence (sub-title)

Trade with Egypt brought with it many goods not available to the local population. Linen and glassware was imported and Egyptian designs were copied, with mosaics depicting the flora and fauna of the Nile River. Worship of the Goddess Isis in Pompeii and Herculaneum was the most significant influence from Egypt. Women and men from all social classes worshipped Isis, with the majority of the priests being women. The Temple of Isis was significant in the daily lives of the people of Pompeii. Garden shrines to her, as well as statuettes of pharaohs and other Egyptian deities, have been found in many homes throughout Pompeii and Herculaneum.

ARCHITECTURE STYLE of PUBLIC BUILDINGS Chapter heading

The Forum in Pompeii contained buildings of diverse and impressive architectural styles.

In the southwest corner of the Forum is the **Basilica**, one of the oldest and most important buildings in the city, built between 120 and 78 BC. It began as a covered market but, in the first century AD, became the seat of the law courts. The Basilica measures 24 x 55 metres with its main entry from the Forum, through a double portico with five doorways. The building was divided by 28 fluted **ionic** columns, 11 metres high, emphasising its balanced design and elegance. The columns were torn apart during the eruption and now resemble truncated trees.

The grandeur of the temples within the Forum expressed the impact religion had on life at this time. The **Temple of Jupiter** stood on a high, Italic style podium, with a façade of six Corinthian columns. The sacred area of the **Temple of Apollo** had a similar podium, surrounded by 48 Doric columns. In contrast, the perimeter of the **Temple of Vespasian** was decorated with bricked-in gabled windows. Next to it was the **Temple of Lares**. Its architectural inspiration was based on the contrast created by niches and columns which lined the internal walls. One block away from the Forum was the **Temple of Fortuna Augusta**, which had stairs leading to the podium. This was surrounded by elegant columns at the front and sides.

The **Hall of the Augustales** in Herculaneum is beautifully restored. It has a quadrangle layout with walls separated by bricked-in arches and four central columns. An inscription placed on the back wall dedicates the building to the Emperor Augustus. It was built by the brothers A. Lucius Proculus and A. Lucius Iulianus. On its inauguration day, the brothers offered a luncheon to members of the municipal senate and the Augustales. In a cell next to the entrance are frescoes of Hercules, Jupiter, Juno and Minerva.

Located away from the Forum, **The Temple of Isis** was the best example of classical Greek architecture in Pompeii. The sacred area is bounded by a high wall with columns surrounding the quadriporticus, where the temple stands. This temple was housed in a walled enclosure and was quickly rebuilt after the earthquake in 62 AD, an indication of its importance.

Athletic sports in the Greek tradition, such as discus, javelin throwing, running and jumping were extremely popular. The **Palaestra** provided swimming pools and open space for sport and exercise. Both Pompeii and Herculaneum had 2 palaestras. In Herculaneum an entire block was dedicated to it. In Pompeii a small palaestra was built initially. Later came the far more impressive Great or Large Palaestra, located near the amphitheatre. A high wall with battlements surrounded an enormous square 130 x 140 metres. There was space for exercise, and a large central swimming pool. A double row of tall plane trees surrounded the pool. This Palaestra was also used as a slave market and cockfighting arena.

Next to the Large Palaestra in Pompeii is the **amphitheatre**, of exceptional importance as it is the oldest known amphitheatre. It was constructed by excavating below ground level, then adding the surrounding seating from ground level upwards. This meant competitors entered the arena walking downward from ground level. Measuring 135 x 104 metres, the amphitheatre could hold up to 20,000 people to watch public games, sponsored by the Aedile. Multiple entrance levels and tunnels allowed easy access. It too had the same seating sections as the theatres, with the upper gallery for women having separate entrances and stairs. Awnings could be erected in hot weather for the comfort of spectators. Trumpet and horn music accompanied the games, which included athletic displays, hunts and battles with wild animals, and the extremely popular gladiators. The gladiatorial contests were staged to honour the Gods, the Emperor's birthday, or to commemorate the Aedile's year in office.

Gladiators were housed in barracks, located in the theatre district on the other side of the city. It contained a **quadriporticus**, a courtyard surrounded by columns and was used for exercise and training.

The **Large Theatre** in Pompeii was the first theatre to be unearthed by archaeologists and built in the Greek style. It was completed at the end of the third century BC with seating for 5000 people. It was set into the natural slope of the lava ridge and built of stone. There was no roof, so the seating area was protected from the weather by a canopy. The seating was allocated three ways. There was a lower section for the upper class, a middle section for the average citizens, and a top section for women. The poor had standing room only. The design of the theatre provided perfect acoustics for all patrons. Two wide entrances gave access to the stage, which was fitted with a curtain. Menander comedies and tragedies by Seneca were performed, as well as Atellan Farce, mime and pantomime. Located next door was the covered theatre or **Odeion**, which is a good example of a roofed theatre, allowing for night performances. The roof may have been pyramid shaped with a double ceiling. It also had three seating areas accommodating 1300 people. The seats for important patrons had winged lion's claws on the sides. The Odeion was used for musical performances, mime, lectures and the reading of verse.

Public baths in Pompeii and Herculaneum were designed for luxury and enjoyment. Marble fixtures, frescoes, silver faucets, serene gardens, swimming pools and exercise areas made daily visits to the baths a pleasure. The engineering of the heating system for the baths was sophisticated, as was the overall interior design.

PRIVATE BUILDINGS Chapter heading

There were no separate residential or industrial areas in either Pompeii or Herculaneum. Within each **insulae**, homes, shops, taverns, and workshops were situated next to each other.

Homes were built in the Roman style, and constructed to face inward. Generally, they had no windows, but drew air and light from the openings of the **atrium** and **peristyle**. No two houses were the same, and varied in size from 50 room mansions to modest homes. Houses were normally single storey but, if there was an upper level, it was usually small and limited to a few rooms. Sometimes, an overhanging porch or **loggia** extended from the second storey. Roofs were covered with red and yellow terracotta tiles. The design and furnishings within a house would indicate the wealth and social status of its owner. Typically, small shops were situated on the outside of a dwelling and faced the street. During the day, many homes were used as offices, where business was conducted. In Herculaneum, the **House of the Beautiful Courtyard** is unusual, with the atrium replaced by a mosaic courtyard. Various rooms open onto it, and a staircase with a gallery of ornamental reliefs leads to the upper storey.

The House of the Faun in Pompeii is beautifully restored. From its plan we can see the important areas. On the outside facing the street were four taverns. From the street, a corridor led into the **Atrium**. The house takes its name from a bronze statue found there. The **atrium** roof was open in the centre for light, and to allow rainwater to run in through the **compluvium**. Beneath it, a stone tank, the **impluvium**, collected the water. Surrounding the richly decorated atrium were small bedrooms or **cubicula**. The atrium acted as an initial meeting place for the householder and his clients. Business discussions then followed in the **tablinum**, which was also used as the family dining room in the evening. The tablinum led to the small **Peristyle** garden surrounded by 28 stucco columns. At the rear of the Peristyle was a hall paved with a famous mosaic. It depicts the battle between Alexander the Great and Darius at Issus and measures 5 by 2.7 metres. This mosaic contained a million and a half pieces of marble. Beyond this hall can be found a second peristyle, the largest and most recent. This was surrounded by 44 Doric columns, with a small lararium nearby.

On the outskirts of Pompeii and Herculaneum, villas were situated on large country estates, either on the slopes of Mount Vesuvius, or overlooking the water. Many were owned by wealthy Romans for holidays on the beautiful Bay of Naples. The **Villa of Mysteries** in Pompeii, located on sloping land, had its western side supported by land fill. This was a particularly innovative technique, creating a single level structure. There were views of the sea, and it was connected to a working winery and had its own bakeries. Some of its 60 rooms contained their own baths. The most beautiful villa on the Bay of Naples was the Villa of Papyri in Herculaneum, owned by Lucio Pison the father in law of Julius Caesar. It was named for the papyri scrolls found in its library, containing the works of little known Greek philosophers.

RELIGION Chapter heading

Religion was an important part of public and private life in Pompeii and Herculaneum. Romans were extremely religious and believed that all aspects of life were controlled by the gods. They prayed, gave offerings and made sacrifices in the temples to win favour, and avert disaster. A wide range of deities were worshipped on a daily basis and it is clear that the Gods played crucial roles in the political, social and economic lives of the people of these cities.

The Temple of Jupiter dominated the Pompeii Forum. Every January, important citizens gathered at this temple to celebrate the New Year. A bull was sacrificed and prayers uttered for the safety of the state. The ceremony did not include the general population, and was conducted only by the priests.

Venus was the patron goddess of Pompeii. She was honoured alongside Fortuna with an annual event held on April first called the **Veneralia**. Venus was associated with love and beauty, and is another indication of the importance of women.

Cicero described religion and its significance in the home as ***“Most sacred, the most hallowed place on earth is the home of each and every citizen. There are his sacred hearth and his household gods, there the very centre of his worship, religion and domestic ritual”***.

Most homes had a small shrine, a **lararium**, which was the centre of worship. The designs varied from wall paintings to elaborate shrines. They depicted the household gods, **Lares**, or the family protectors; the **genius**, or the spirit of the **paterfamilias**, the ‘power of the father’; and **Penates**, the protectors of food stores. The image of a snake wrapping itself around an altar represented fertility and protection. Daily offerings were made to the gods.

In both cities, there were altars of the Lares within tabernae and Thermopoliums. In addition, there were altars located in streets, for the devotions of travellers, the poor, and slaves who had none. These shrines were called the **Lares compitales**, or those ‘of the crossroads.’

Following Roman custom, the people of Pompeii and Herculaneum honoured their ancestors’ memories. A fine example of this is the bust of Hermes in the atrium of his family home at Herculaneum.

A host of foreign gods from Greece, Egypt and Asia were introduced. The Greek cult of Dionysus became a Roman cult **Bacchus**. Honouring Bacchus the god of wine involved first fasting, then drinking, feasting and frenzied dancing, until the devotees were in a state of ecstasy, believing themselves released from death. These rites were associated with fertility, death and rebirth. The Romans were tolerant of foreign religions, but were shocked by the sensual nature of some of the Dionysian rites. In 186 BC, the Roman government banned some of the extreme **Bacchanalia** practices, but this ruling was ignored in Pompeii. A wall painting found in the dining room of Pompeii’s Villa of Mysteries illustrates a sacred Dionysian initiation ceremony.

The Egyptian cult of **Isis** was established in Pompeii well before 80 BC when the Romans took control of the region. Isis, an Egyptian mother goddess, was the most popular foreign deity. Isis was seen as the universal mother who cleansed and comforted her followers with the promise of immortality. Unlike Roman religions found in Pompeii, the priests were predominately female.

The initiation rites and daily rituals associated with the cult appealed particularly to women, although there were some male devotees.

The Temple of Isis was one of the most important sanctuaries in the city. It contained halls for public ceremonies, and statues to the Egyptian gods Isis, Osiris and Horus. There were large rooms for the secret meetings of initiates, lodgings for priests, and a small room for storing the Nile water used in purification. Also within the temple, was a **purgatorium**, where the priests of Isis would cleanse themselves before worship. There were two daily services. The first was at sunrise to symbolise re-birth, with another in the early afternoon, at which time water from the Nile was blessed. A fresco from Herculaneum depicts these rituals, held behind the walls of the temple enclosure. Ceremonies were accompanied by chanting, the sounds of the sistrum, a musical instrument like a rattle, and the burning of incense.

Although Christianity was slowly spreading throughout the Roman Empire, there is no conclusive evidence that, at the time of the eruption, Christianity had been introduced into either Pompeii or Herculaneum.

Roman law prevented burial within city limits, and at both Pompeii and Herculaneum, the **necropolis** were located beyond the city gates. In Pompeii there was a necropolis along almost every road leading into it. Tombs were elaborately decorated. Their size and grandeur depicted the wealth, career, contribution to civic service, and religious beliefs of the deceased.

The **Street of Tombs** in Pompeii is accessed from the Herculaneum Gate, and, with its spectacular monuments, it is one of Pompeii's finest streets. Most notable is the **Tomb of Mamia** which was designed as a semi-circular seat. Mamia, a former priestess, was highly respected, and the city council voted in favour of its construction, so that relatives and passers-by could sit, rest and drink.

This mosaic, found in a house in Pompeii, indicates that death was openly accepted. Death was marked by a rite called **conclamatio**, at which relatives cried the deceased's name aloud. The body was washed, oiled and preserved by the women. A coin was placed under the tongue to pay the ferryman **Charon**, who transported the soul to the underworld. The body was laid out in the atrium for visitors to show their respect.

After the cremation, a banquet was held near the tomb. Urns containing the ashes of the dead were placed in niches within the tomb. Nine days of mourning was followed by another banquet.

Ancestors occupied an important position in family life where heredity, wealth and integrity were highly regarded.

As yet, no tombs have been discovered at Herculaneum.

DESTRUCTION and DISCOVERY Chapter heading

Pompeii and Herculaneum were completely buried when Mount Vesuvius erupted. Exactly what happened on the 24th August AD 79 remained a mystery for centuries.

The work of archaeologists in the 19th and 20th centuries began to unravel the story of Pompeii and Herculaneum. Giuseppe Fiorelli and Amedeo Maiuri were two scientists most noted for the advances they made in excavating these sites.

In the 21st Century there are issues of conservation, reconstruction and ethics to be resolved. There are over two and a half million visitors to the area each year. Buildings are damaged, graffiti is widespread and fragments of stone and pottery are stolen, while trampling feet destroy ancient pavements. As well, there is a conflict of opinions regarding the ethics of collecting, studying and displaying human remains.

In the programme “Investigating the Past” we examine the discoveries made which reveal the secrets of Pompeii and Herculaneum.

END CREDITS