Brief Guide to Pompeii

POMPEI
ERCOLANO
BORCAREALE
OPLONTIS
STABIA
Welcome to the Vesuvian archaeological areas.

In the archaeological areas the law D. lgs 81/08 is applied according to the historical and archaeological important heritage protection rules and restrictions, especially in the archaeological Vesuvian area. We especially ask you to follow the rules* below for a more enjoyable and safer stay:

1. Be extremely careful when moving about. Do not stand on the edge of the digs or climb the walls.
2. Please respect all entrance and access restrictions.
3. Please show respectful behavior, refraining from making unnecessary noise, writing on the walls, and littering. Please place all garbage in the containers provided.
4. Photographs and movie filming are authorized solely for private use; you must contact the Soprintendenza before filming with tripods, flash and artificial lighting, or for any commercial use.
5. Guides do not work for the Soprintendenza. They are official and authorized by the Regione Campania. They have to show their licence under request.
6. It is forbidden the access with purses, backpacks and any type of lugagge.
7. Smoking is not permitted.
8. Pets are not allowed.
9. For visitors with motor difficulties and heart problems are suggest to enter at Piazza Anfiteatro.

People with motor difficulties and heart problems should be especially careful.

We suggest that you wear low-heeled shoes on your visit.

Visitors are informed that an audio tour service, authorized by the Soprintendenza, is available.

A picnic area is provided nearby Porta Nola.

*from the Regulations for visitors to the Excavations (n. 213 dated 22.01.01)
Rome began to look towards southern Italy; systems of alliances and victorious military campaigns made it hegemonic throughout Campania (343-290 BC). Pompeii thus entered the Roman political organization, or res publica, as a socia (ally), but in 90-89 BC it rebelled along with other Italic populations, who demanded equal social and political respect from Rome. Placed under siege by the troops led by P. Cornelius Sulla, the city surrendered and became a Roman colony with the name of Cornelia Veneria Pompeianorum (80 BC).

After being "downgraded" to colony, Pompeii was enhanced with private and public buildings, and further embellished especially during the reigns of the emperors Octavian Augustus (27 BC-14 AD) and Tiberius (14-37 AD). A violent earthquake struck the whole Vesuvian area in 62 AD. Reconstruction began immediately in Pompeii, but the extent of the damage was so great—not to mention the aftershocks that followed—repairs took a very long time: 17 years later, when Vesuvius
suddenly erupted on the 24th August of 79 AD to bury it under ash and rock, Pompeii was still an ongoing construction site. It was rediscovered in the 16th century, but exploration did not begin until 1748 under the King of Naples Charles III of Bourbon, and continued systematically into the nineteenth century, until the most recent works of excavation, restoration and enhancement of the ancient city and its extraordinary wealth of architecture, sculptures, paintings, and mosaics. The archeological area of Pompeii extends for approximately 66 ha, of which approximately 45 have been excavated. The city was divided into regiones (neighbourhoods) and insulae (blocks) by G. Fiorelli in 1858, to simplify study and orientation. When the owner was not well known, the excavators invented the building names based on particular finds or other circumstances.
This privately owned facility (1st cent. BC - 1st cent. AD) is built on an artificial terrace facing the sea, just outside the walls: eminent due to its scenic position, it was repeatedly pillaged over the centuries. On the ground floor are the sumptuously decorated bathing rooms, including the warm indoor pool, and the small cold pool with painted walls ending in a niche: a waterfall bubbled up from an imitation cave, decorated with a mosaic depicting Mars and cherubs. The *frigidarium* (cold room) has a decoration of stucco squares. There is a curious ‘fourth style’* fresco in the dressing room: 16 panels show erotic scenes, including one with two women—unique in Roman painting.
Similar to a bastion, facing west, together with Porta Ercolano it is the most imposing of the seven gates of Pompeii. It takes its name from the fact that its road led to the sea. It has two barrel arches (round arch opening), later combined into a single, large barrel vault in opus caementicium*. The ring of walls visible today, already present in the 6th cent. BC, is over three, 3,200 m long: it is generally a solid ring of wall, protected on the outside by a moat and inside by an embankment, atop which runs the patrol walkway. Twelve towers to the north, where the flat ground made Pompeii more vulnerable, also ensured its defense. Pompeii's definitive entry into the Roman orbit (with the Sullan colonization: 80 BC) reduced the importance of the walls, which were occasionally reused or destroyed to make room for houses and baths.
Built at the western edge of the hill of Pompeii, stretching towards the sea and the River Sarno, this temple was raised during the early part of the Sullan colony (80 BC) to honor the goddess Venus, protectress of Lucius Cornelius Sulla, assimilated into the Physical Venus, protectress of the city. It therefore falls within the 'regimental' architectural program inaugurated by the Roman conquest. Facing north-south towards the seaside, on a tufa podium surrounded by porticos and embellished with marble, it was probably the most sumptuous and visually captivating of the city’s religious buildings, but its prominent position made it the target of repeated pillaging, thus it is difficult to interpret today.
Temple of Apollo

Along with the Doric temple, this is the most ancient sanctuary in Pompeii as evidenced by the surviving architectural decoration dating from 575-550 BC, although the current layout is from the 2nd cent. BC. (subsequently redefined until the earthquake in 62 AD), when the tufa quadriporticus was built with its Ionic columns and Doric trabeation with metope* and triglyphs*. The building combines Italic (high podium with front entry stairs) and Greek elements (colonnade around the cell). The floor of the cell is made of polychrome stone diamond shapes, creating a cube-like effect. On either side of the portico are the statues of Apollo and Diana, depicted as archers (originals at the Naples Museum); the altar at the foot of the steps is from the Sullan period (approximately 80 BC); the colonnade with sundial dates from Augustus.
Built in the second half of the 2nd cent. BC, as part of the plan to create monuments throughout the city. It has a rectangular layout, with three naves, with a ceiling sloping straight down in both directions from the central columns and half columns at the top of the walls, where there are still remains of decorations in ‘first style’*: at the back is the tribunal, where the magistrates sat, reached by a wooden staircase. The building was dedicated to administering justice and for business negotiations.
The first monumental arrangement dates from the 2nd cent. BC, with a few buildings and the porticos with their double row of tufa columns, replaced with white limestone in the imperial age, when the site was repaved and buildings added on the east side where shops had previously stood. Located at the intersection between the two main streets of the original urban center, the Forum was the city’s main square, where cart traffic was forbidden: it was surrounded on all sides by religious, political, and business buildings. In the 1st cent. AD the Forum highlighted the celebratory intention of the imperial house, where the monumental bases for commemorative statues were placed on the south side, in front of the city’s administrative buildings, while those of illustrious citizens stood along the porticos: the sculptures have not been found, perhaps because they were removed by the people of Pompeii who returned after the eruption to take whatever they could. In the center of the western side stands an orators’ tribune.
Remodelled in opus latericium* after the earthquake in 62 AD, these were not built according to a coordinated plan: the two to the east are from the same period (before 80 BC); the other is more recent, and still has its marble floor. These are rectangular rooms, with central niches, whose function is the subject of some debate: the eastern hall may have been the meeting room for the administrators, the central hall the tabularium (legal archive), the other, the hall of the decurions*.

Next, opening onto via dell’Abbondanza, is the Comitium, an open-air hall where the populus was summoned to exercise their political-administrative rights. Completed before 89 BC, it has a tribunal on the south side, flanked by niches with statues: it held the administrators, who presided over the assemblies and supervised the voting procedures.
The priestess Eumachia, patron of the fullers, had the building erected in the Tiberian period (14-37 AD); its façade of opus latericium* dates from after 62 AD. The niches on the front held celebratory statues of the imperial house, also recalled by the delicate marble relief of the portal, reminiscent of Augustan examples in Rome (according to some, it decorated the entrance to the temple of Vespasian, or a pilaster). The interior had a columned portico, with statues of the Concordia Augustus in the exedra* at the back, and of members of the imperial family on either side; around it runs a closed hallway, with the statue of Eumachia in the niche behind the exedra* (original at the Naples Museum). The building may have been the wool market, or the headquarters of the fullones guild. To the right of the entrance was a walled jar, in which people could urinate by climbing a short staircase: the emperor Vespasian taxed the use of urine as a fabric bleach and degreasing agent.
Attributed to the worship of the Genius of the emperor Vespasian, the building was under construction or being remodelled at the time of the eruption (79 AD). At the back of an outdoor courtyard is the small temple, with four columns on the front, accessed by stairs on either side of the podium, with the statue of the emperor. In the center, on a low plinth, is the white marble altar: on the long side is the scene with the sacrifice of a bull, typical of the imperial cult; in the background, a temple similar to this same building has led scholars to suggest that it is a sacrifice celebrated for its inauguration. On the short sides are the tools of the ritual; on the other long side is the civic crown of oak leaves resting on a shield, a prerogative of his imperial majesty.

A few scholars believe that the temple was dedicated to the Genius of Octavian Augustus (63 BC-14 AD, the first Roman emperor: the religious title of 'Augustus' was granted by the Senate in 27 BC), then to the Genius of the various emperors that followed, and finally to Titus Flavius Vespasian.
This may have been built after the earthquake in 62 AD and dedicated to the gods who protected Pompeii, to publicly expiate the divine ire with the city, so clearly evident from the disaster (prodigium) that had struck; but according to some scholars, it dates from before 62 AD and was related to the worship of the imperial family. The building has a complex architecture, with numerous niches and columns against the walls, which were to be richly decorated with marble but were never completed. The support structure is in opus latericium*, the masonry in opus reticulatum* and opus incertum*. In the center of the area was the sacrificial altar.
The building, which was the city's main market, dates from the 2nd cent. BC and underwent subsequent renovations: the bases in front of the entrance portico held commemorative statues of illustrious citizens. The interior has a porticoed courtyard with shops. The 12 bases in the center acted as stands for wooden poles that supported a conical roof; at the back, the room on the right was used for the sale of meat and fish, the one on the left perhaps for banquets in the emperor's honor, to whom was dedicated a sacellum in the center of the back wall. The northwest wall has frescoes in 'fourth style': fantasy architectural elements alternating with panels of isolated figures, paintings of mythological figures, popular still lifes.
This dates from the 2nd cent. BC and has a high podium, with an entry staircase on the front, over which the cell rises: the latter, preceded by columns and divided into three by a double colonnade, held a statue of Jupiter, of which the head remains, from the Sullan period (approximately 80 BC), when the building was converted into a Capitolium and dedicated to the worship of the ‘Capitoline Triad’ (Jupiter, Juno, Minerva). The floor of the cell, as in the temple of Apollo, had a rhomboid polychrome stone pattern, arranged in imitation of perspective cubes (opus scutulatum). The podium was restored in the Tiberian period (14-37 AD), when the large altar located in the Forum, aligned with the temple, was also replaced.
The produce market (‘forum olitorio’) was built after 62 AD, and may not have been completed (or was not in use) at the time of the eruption: it took the form of porticoed rooms, and was flanked by a large latrine. It is now used to store various archeological materials from Pompeii (amphorae, architectural elements, marble garden furniture); a few plaster casts of victims of the eruption are on display.
Near the produce market and built into the east wall of the temple of Apollo, active beginning in the late 2nd cent. BC, this was the public office to control weights and measures, gauged according to the local Oscan system, later standardized to the Augustan system as noted in the inscription engraved on the front (approximately 20 BC). It consists of two stacked limestone benches, each with cavities corresponding to the different measurements, and with a hole at the bottom through which to pass the product measured.
These were built after 80 BC, following the same layout as the larger Stabian Baths: on either side of the furnaces are the men's and women's sections, according to the sequence *apodyterium* (dressing room), *frigidarium* (cold bathing room), *tepidarium* (warm room), *caldarium* (hot room). The porticoed palaestra could be entered from Via del Foro or the dressing room of the men's section. The *tepidarium* was not heated using modern means, but by a large bronze brazier donated by M. Nigidio Vaccula. Telamons* separate the niches to hold unguents and bath items; stuccoes in relief (from the later restoration in 62 AD) decorated the vault with geometric partitions and mythological figures. Public baths were inexpensive and heavily used: bath time was apparently in the early afternoon.
Buildings dedicated to worship of the Fortuna Redux were built in Rome and other Italian cities upon Augustus’s return from his expeditions in 19-13 BC: in Pompeii it was the duumvir* M. Tullius who insisted on building the temple in honor of the emperor, at his own expense and on his own land, with marble columns and Corinthian capitals on the front. The cell, preceded by four columns in front and two on either side, held the statue of Fortuna and the side niches those of the imperial family and perhaps M. Tullius himself.
With its 2,970 m² it is the largest house in Pompeii: built over a previous dwelling at the beginning of the 2nd century BC, its current form is the result of subsequent alterations. The entrance on the left leads directly into the public section, the door on the right to the private rooms: an atrium whose roof is supported by four columns, stalls, latrine, baths, kitchen. At the entrance is the Latin message HAVE. The ‘first style’ decoration, the floors of sectile opus*, and the mosaic threshold (now at the Naples Museum) highlight the dignity of this house, more similar to the aristocratic Roman domus than local upper class dwellings. In the center of the impluvium* is a bronze statue of the ‘faun’ (2nd cent. BC: original in Naples); around it are rooms that held mosaic paintings on the floor and ‘first style’ decorations on the walls. Between the two porticoed gardens is the exedra*, the core of the dwelling, with Corinthian columns, stuccoed and painted capitals, a splendid mosaic (now at the Naples Museum) depicting the victory of Alexander the Great over Darius, King of Persia, which has helped suggest a connection between the Macedonian ruler and the unknown, educated, and wealthy owner of the house.
The original layout (early 1st cent. BC) retains the typical plan of the "atrium style" house, based on the entrance-atrium-tablinum* axis, sumptuously organized so that the guest would become aware of the host's social status immediately upon entering. Almost all of the rooms open onto the atrium. The roof has folds sloping inward (compluvium*) to gather rainwater in a tub in the center of the floor (impluvium*), and from here to the cistern below, from where it could be recovered. In the garden, the walls of the peristyle* are richly decorated with frescoed landscapes and maritime buildings; use of the fountain-nymphaeum, covered with mosaics and decorated with sculptures, became widespread in the middle of the 1st cent. AD.
This is one of the most sumptuous and largest houses from the latter period of Pompeii: uncovered in 1828-1829, it is famous for its numerous ‘fourth style’* paintings and use of large open spaces. The dwelling centers around one of the four known ‘Corinthian atriums’ in Pompeii, with the roof supported by numerous columns: here there are 12, made of tufa. The wall decoration is by the same shop who did the House of the Vettii: the most significant paintings (the one at the entrance with the Dioscuri, Castor and Pollux, gives the dwelling its name) are at the Naples Archeological Museum, but in the peristyle* we can still admire painted panels depicting slender buildings and still lifes.
The now-faded painting with Meleager and Atalanta, at the left entrance, gives the house its name. Within the complex construction of the house, worthy of note is the living and receiving room (oecus) in the Corinthian style, thus decorated with columns, a rarity in Pompeii. The rooms around the atrium, with its central impluvium*, have preserved their original floors (Republican period) in signinum opus*, decorated with white tiles.
The oft-depicted god Apollo lent his name to this house, which may have belonged to A. Here(n)uleius Communis, as gleaned from a signet ring found there in 1830. The statues of Apollo and Faun hunting a deer (now at the Naples Museum) decorated the entrance to the tablinum*, where there is a small painting of Venus. The cubicle at the back of the garden retains a rich decoration; on the outside, the porous limestone covering held rich mosaic decorations, of which we can still see a colorful mosaic showing Ulysses recognizing Achilles in disguise, hidden among the daughters of King Likomidi of Skyros. Inside are frescoes with scenes related to the myth of Apollo.
This is a typical ‘atrium style’ house, although rather smaller compared to other grandiose dwellings. The name comes from the mosaic **emblema** in the tablinum*, depicting the scene of a theatre rehearsal by a choir of satyrs, now at the Naples Archeological Museum along with other paintings of Admetus and Alcestis and episodes from the Iliad; the remaining ones those of the oecus (living room) depicting Ariadne abandoned by Theseus and a nest of cherubs. At the entrance of the house is the famous mosaic with a chained dog and the message **CAVE CANEM** (“beware of the dog”), typical of other dwellings in Pompeii; this warning is also recalled in literary sources, such as in the entertaining episode of Petronius’s *Satyricon*, in which the protagonist is frightened to death by the large painted cane. This is the house, at the time just uncovered (1824-1825), that served as a model for the home of Glaucus in the novel by E. Bulwer-Lytton, *The Last Days of Pompeii* (1834).
The Ionic capitals of the porticoed garden date the dwelling to 140-120 BC; it has an ‘atrium style’ layout, based on the entrance-atrium-tablinum* axis, and occupies the entire block. Colored stones and brick fragments pave the sidewalk in front of the entrance and the vestibule. According to the notice painted in an adjacent alleyway, during the final days of Pompeii, the rich and powerful owner Cn. Alleius Nigidius Maius, a merchant originally from Campania and duumvir* in 55-56 AD, rented out part of it.
This dates from the 2nd cent. BC, but remodelling after the 62 AD earthquake converted the ground floor of the house into workrooms, while the residential function moved to the top floor, reached by the stairs to the right of the atrium entrance: it appears that work was not yet complete at the time of the eruption (79 AD). For a long time this was the only large bakery brought to light in Pompeii, among the 35 now known.

The *hortus* (garden) contained the machinery for grinding wheat and for preparing and baking bread: the water basins, the vaulted oven, four millstones of lava rock on a base in opus incertum*. In the open room on the right, two stone blocks supported the table on which the bread rested before baking, while the room to the left of the tablinum* was the kitchen. The feed bin was against the wall of the stalls, which open onto the garden and Vico di Modesto: here it seems a fully harnessed mule skeleton was found.
Damaged by the bombing in 1943, the house is one of the most ancient (3rd cent. BC): it is attributed to A. Cossius Libanus, as suggested by a signet ring found in 1806, and not to the C. Sallustio mentioned on the façade. It may have been converted into an inn, with many rooms, even on the upper floor added later. It retains part of the luxurious ‘first style’* decoration: the ancient garden had two porticos with limestone columns. On the edge of the tufa impluvium* in the atrium was a bronze fawn. A corridor leads to the rooms added to the original core in the 1st cent. BC, perhaps used by the innkeeper: here, on the back wall of a small garden, is the depiction of Actaeon attacked by the dogs of the goddess Diana (whom the hunter had dared to see naked).
Iron and bronze surgical instruments such as probes, gynecological forceps, catheters, scalpels give the house its name, one of the most ancient in Pompeii (3rd cent. BC), with square limestone blocks in the façade and internal walls built in ‘opus africanum’*. With its regular layout, the house is the result of at least two subsequent renovations, in addition to an upper floor in the rustic section: recent studies believe that the tufa impluvium* is the original. The surviving decoration is especially admirable in a windowed room facing the garden, with ‘first style’* paintings on the exterior (2nd cent. BC) and ‘fourth style’* inside (after 50 AD).
The gate is so named because it opened onto the road linking Pompeii to Herculaneum. It has three barrel arches, of which the side ones are smaller: the vault is partly collapsed. The gate was built after the city was conquered by the Roman general Silla in 89 BC. Inside, the walls adjacent to the gate date from the 3rd cent. BC. The staircase visible to the right of the gate allowed easy access to the patrol walkway. Outside the gate, on the left, there are still the walls built with large blocks of tufa, approximately 7 m high. Along this section we can still see the marks left by the stone shots launched against the city during Silla's siege. You can see a section of the walls by entering the gate on the left.
Uncovered in 1763-1838, the necropolis of Porta Ercolano is the city's best known, with buildings dating from the middle of the 1st cent. BC to the 1st cent. A.D. During this period the dead were cremated and the ashes stored in an urn walled into the tomb, or buried and indicated with a marker in the shape of a human bust (columella).

Among the many burials, worthy of note are the tomb in the shape of a semicircular seat of the priestess Mamia; the large burial chamber topped by a circular aedicula, which had the statues of eminent figures of the gens Istacidia between the columns; the marble-covered altar tombs (54-68 AD) of C. Calventius Quietus (with the bisellium, or dual seat, symbol of the honor granted to sit in the front row of a theatre), Naevoleia Tyche and C. Munatius Faustus (the cargo ship refers to the merchant business of the latter).
Uncovered in 1771-1774, this pseudo-urban villas was attributed to *M. Arrius Diomedes*, whose tomb is in front of the monumental entrance leading directly into the peristyle*, as prescribed for villas by Latin architect Vitruvius. Next to that is the bath area, and the residential and service rooms; visitors enjoyed a splendid view from the triclinium*, overlooking the garden below and the sea. A staircase led to the lower section of the luxurious villa (no longer open to the public), built on a cryptoporticus that acted as a wine cellar and supports a peristyle* around the garden. Two entangled bodies were discovered at the back door, one of whom was wearing a gold ring and holding a silver key, as well as a wad of 1356 sesterces. Eighteen other bodies, including women and children, were discovered in the basement, suffocated by the fumes.
Built on the slope towards the seaside in the 2nd cent. BC, it was renovated around 60 BC, then again in the 1st cent. AD: it is one of the more than 100 villas discovered in the Vesuvian area, usually related to agriculture, but it was also fashionable for the upper classes to have an out of town "getaway" where they could recreate an environment suffused with Greek culture. It includes a residential section overlooking the sea and decorated with splendid specimens of 'second style'* (early 1st cent.-20 BC), and a servants' section next to the winery rooms (torcularia): here stands a rebuilt grape press, with its ram's head trunk. Along the walls of the triclinium* is the large fresco (megalographia) depicting a mystery ritual scene (whence the name of the villa), a woman's initiation to marriage. Splendid examples of 'third style'* on a black background are found in the tablinum*, with miniaturist motifs drawn from Egyptian art.
With the exception, it seems, of Porta Marina, there was a necropolis along every road entering the city, outside the walls. Here we note the tufa tomb, a semicircular seat (schola) typical of important women, belonging to Arellia Tertulla, perhaps the wife of the augur and duumvir* M. Stlaborius Veius Fronto; next to it, with a base of tufa and stuccoed opus incertum* and a column that must have held a marble vase, is the tomb of Septumia, to whom the city administrator—the epigraph recalls—donated the land and money for burial. Monumental is the tomb of C. Vestorius Priscus, dead at the age of 22, builder (administrator in charge of roads, buildings, public order) in 75-76 AD: a fence encloses a base topped by an altar. Here we find stuccoes in relief, showing maenads and satyrs; the interior walls of the fence are frescoed with hunting scenes, gladiator battles, and episodes from the life of the deceased. A mensa complete with silver service shows the social status of the deceased.
This is a watershed, the city end of one branch of the Augustan Serinus aqueduct. Placed at the highest point in Pompeii (42 m), at Porta Vesuvio, it used the pressure of the waterfall to distribute it through three primary channels: a system of sluice-gates regulated the flow of water as needed. It has a circular layout, with a domed vault approximately 6 m in diameter, and a trapezoidal external shape maintained to its full height. The west side is in opus reticulatum*, as is the east, against which rests the wall of Porta Vesuvio. The north wall is in opus incertum*, the south in opus latericium*, interrupted by three blind arches, perhaps rebuilt after the earthquake in 62 AD and the following years that damaged the building; in 79 AD this large tank and the city's entire water system, with approximately 40 public fountains, were not working.
The name is due to the cherubs on gold laminate (at the Naples Museum) that decorated one room: graffiti reveal the owner to be Cn. Poppaeus Habitus, related to Poppea Sabina, Nero's second wife. The building (3rd cent. BC, variously remodeled through the 1st cent. AD) is organized around the peristyle* with garden, onto which the rooms open. Mythological subjects and landscapes in the ‘third style’* decorate the walls of the public sitting room: a black and white mosaic rosette decorates the floor, in a style fashionable in the Augustan period. The garden was decorated with marble reliefs and sculptures reminiscent of the natural world and Dionysian, occasionally used as fountain jets according to taste, imitating the look of country residences. In addition to the masonry lararium (aedicula) for traditional worship, the peristyle* also contains a painted one depicting Egyptian divinities: Anubis, with the head of a jackal, god of the dead; Arpocrates, child god, son of Isis* and Osiris; Isis* and Serapides, the healing god. Alongside are objects from the cult of Isis*, guarded by the sacred cobra (*uraeus*), with the *agathodemoni* snakes at the bottom, favorable idols.
House of Caecilius Jucundus

It was built (late 3rd-early 2nd cent. BC) in opus africanum* using Sarno limestone, with tufa used for the decorative parts. It is especially famous for its two reliefs—one of which has been stolen, the other (in storage) decorating the lararium (domestic sacellum)—that vividly depicted in popular fashion the effects of the earthquake (62 AD) on some of the public buildings of Pompeii. To the left of the tablinum* is a cast portrait of the banker L. Caecilius Iucundus, who lived in the house in 79 AD, and whose archive of 154 waxed tablets has been found: these record the amounts he paid between 52 and 62 AD to people on behalf of whom he had sold goods (especially slaves) or collected rents, keeping a commission of 1-4% for himself.
The economic-social axis of Pompeii moves towards Via di Stabia: thus it is in this area that a new bath complex was designed, which replaced an entire block of the 9th region and which, begun after 62 AD, was never completed. Note that no separate sections are provided for men and women. An effective room heating system was installed, but at the time of the eruption the furnaces were still missing, and there still remained to organize the garden with pilastered portico, the palaestra, and the pool. On either side of the main entrance, in via di Nola, two small rooms were to act as ticket booth and a place to check valuables.
Campaign slogans and two signet rings tell us that this domus belonged to the Vettii, wealthy freedmen: renovated in the 1st cent. AD, it centers around the peristyle*. The paintings at the entrance highlight wishes of prosperity in cursive style: especially noticeable is the figure of Priapus, god of fertility, resting his enormous member on the plate of a scale, counterweighted by a bag of money. To the right of the entrance is the lararium, an aedicula whose back wall was painted with lares and the genius of the homeowner engaged in sacrifice; below, the snake *agathodemon*, a benevolent idol. The kitchen hearth has a grate and pots: here was found the statue-fountain of Priapus, belonging in the garden, where other statues and decorative fountains were arranged in a richly scenic context. The ‘fourth style’* atrium is also very elegant, such as the *compluvium* with its terracotta gutters. The sitting room is famous for its panels in ‘Pompeii red’, and for the frieze with cherubs engaged in trades and games. The ‘fourth style’* walls with mythological paintings transform the living room into a sort of art gallery, increasing the cultural image of the owner.
The original layout remained through later remodelling, with ‘fourth style’* decorations completed immediately prior to the eruption in 79 AD. The house has the typical "atrium style" plan, based on the entrance-atrium-tablinum* axis, sumptuously organized so that the guest would become aware of the host's social status immediately upon entering. The decoration in the second room to the right of the atrium is especially well preserved; less so the large scene painted on the back wall of the garden, depicting a wild hunt: an allusion to the suburban villas and their hunting grounds. Sumptuous frescoes are found in the tablinum, opening onto the atrium and garden: the molding imitates marble wall coverings, the predella depicts Nile landscapes and cherub hunters, and the walls have sky blue panels similar to wind-filled tapestries.
The ‘bakery’ may have belonged to *N. Popidius Priscus*, who lived in the house next door, n. 20, and who managed it through a libertus*. Typical features of the 34 bakeries identified in Pompeii are the wood-burning oven, similar to those used today, and the millstones (here there are four, plus a smaller one) made of hard, porous lava stone, which did not leave fragments in the flour (dangerous to one’s teeth!). The millstones are made up of a tapered block (*meta*) fastened to a brick base, around which turned an hourglass-shaped element (*catillus*), tied with a bar to the mule that forced it to turn. The grain was poured into the *catillus* and ground as the two blocks rubbed together. This bakery is missing a sales counter: it probably sold its products wholesale, or through peddlers (*libarii*). Use of bread became widespread among the Romans during the 2nd cent. BC: previously, flour was primarily used to prepare *puls*, a wheat mush.
Lupa in Latin means prostitute, and this is the best organized of Pompeii’s many brothels, the only one designed specifically for this purpose: the others were simply single rooms, or part of the top floor of a shop. There are 5 rooms on the ground floor, as well as the upper floor, plus a latrine; the stone beds were covered by a mattress. Paintings depicting the different positions to be used in the erotic games decorated the lupanare. The prostitutes were slaves, usually of Greek or Oriental origin. Prices ranged from 2 to 8 as (a portion of wine cost 1) but the revenues, being earned by women without legal standing, went to the owner or manager (lenone) of the brothel. The building dates from the city's final days: in one cell, fresh plaster captured the print of a coin from 72 AD.
This is the city’s most ancient bath building (2nd cent. BC), built over a previous facility (4th-3rd century BC) and later restored. East of the porticoed central palaestra are the bathing rooms, divided into women's and men's sections: frigidarium (with tub for cold bath), apodyterium (dressing room), tepidarium (warm room), caldarium (hot bath), furnaces (to produce heat). To the north is a large latrine, to the west a swimming pool (natatio). At the entrance and in the palaestra we can still see elegant decorations of polychrome stucco, dating from just before the eruption in 79 AD, with figurative and mythological subjects in the ‘fourth style’; made of lime and calcite, stucco was moisture resistant. Note the method used to heat the rooms: the floor was supported by short brick pillars (suspensurae) to leave an empty space (hypocaustum) below, through which the warm air produced by the furnaces could circulate: it also flowed through ducts in the walls, to envelop the room completely.
Located at the southern edge of the hill of Pompeii, stretching towards the sea and the River Sarno, this triangular piazza is introduced by majestic propylaea (gateways) with Ionic columns, and enveloped by a portico of 95 Doric columns—except on the south side, to avoid blocking the view. It is part of a complete urban development project that arranged the entire area of the ‘theatres’ and ‘temples’ (‘Doric’, of Isis, of Jupiter Meilichius) in the 2nd cent. BC. Along the east side of the colonnade runs a low wall, marking a broad corridor: perhaps a track for athletic and horse races, held on religious holidays.

Then there is a lovely building, with a central layout (tholos) around an ancient sacred well with seven Doric columns of tufa and, perhaps, a conical roof, built by the Samnite magistrate Numerius Trebius (as stated in the Oscan inscription of the architrave).
Towards the western edge of the sacred area is a temple from the first half of the 6th cent. BC, remodelled several times, severely damaged by the 62 AD earthquake and fallen into disuse before the final eruption. Doric in style, it had 11 columns on the long side and 7 on the short side, surrounding the deep cell. Remaining are the steps of the base, a few capitals, and an off-center base on the east side of the cell, which may have corresponded to a similar one on the other side: it is therefore presumed to be dedicated to two divinities, Athena and Hercules—greatly worshipped among the Italic peoples—as also suggested by an Oscan epigraph found nearby and the antefixes that decorated the temple.
Built in the 2nd cent. BC, this theatre takes advantage of the natural slope of the land to create the tiers of seats (cavea), in a horseshoe shape divided into three zones, of which the lower (ima cavea), covered with marble, was reserved for the decurions* and important citizens. The ring corridor supporting the upper tiers, and the 'balconies' above the side entrances, were added during the Augustan period: thus the theatre could hold approximately 5,000 spectators. The stage and opus latericium* backdrop—decorated with marbles and statues—date from the restoration in 62 AD, after the earthquake. The works performed here quite likely included the Atellanae (popular farces in the Oscan language), the plays of Plautus and Terentius, mimes and pantomimes (with dancing and music).
A sort of foyer, this large space—porticoed on four sides—must have been quite large: it was a classic feature of Hellenic theatres codified by Vitruvius in *De architectura*, where the spectators of the two nearby theatres could stroll during intermissions between shows, or take shelter in case of rain. Perhaps a contemporary of the *Odeon* (approximately 80 BC), not until after the earthquake in 62 AD were rooms added on two floors, along the longer boundary walls. The gladiator weapons found here have suggested the hypothesis that, during the final years of the city, the building was used as barracks for the gladiators.
This ‘small theatre’, perhaps used for musical performances and poetry readings, was built in the early years of the Sullan colony (around 80 BC). According to inscriptions found here, it had a roof to ensure excellent acoustics: this rested on outer walls that bordered the tiers of seats (cavea), decorated with sculpted telamons*: the lower part (ima cavea) has low, wide seating steps (bisellia) reserved for the decurions*; a balustrade decorated with winged gryphon paws distinguishes it from the media cavea.
An inscription found at Porta Stabia seems to testify that Jupiter Meilichius (‘sweet as honey’) was worshipped here: along with the goddesses Hera and Aphrodite, Zeus/Jupiter was worshipped with this nickname mainly in Greece, in relation to divinities of the underworld and secret rituals. The entrance to the sacred yard is along Via di Stabia: the gate, which is not monumental, leads to the portico supported by two columns (of which the foundations and one Doric capital remain) and to the courtyard: in the center stands an altar of Nocera tufa. Steps lead to the podium: four columns in front and two on either side, with Corinthian capitals, led up to the cell, which had a pedestal at the back for religious statues. The building seems to date from the 3rd-2nd cent. BC, with some remodelling in the Sullan period (80 BC). An old hypothesis has recently returned in vogue, attributing the temple to the worship of Asclepius and Hygea, based on the terracotta statues and other objects found in the temple.
A porticoed courtyard, with stuccoed Corinthian columns, hosts the temple on a podium in its center, built at the end of the 2nd cent. BC and rebuilt in opus latericium* immediately after the earthquake in 62 AD by N. Popidius Ampliatus, who gave credit for it to his son Celsinus to advance the latter's political career. The front steps lead to the pronaos, with four columns in front and two on the sides, and two side niches that held statues of Anubis and Harpokrates, Egyptian divinities related to the cult of Isis*. At the back, in the wide cell, was the base for the religious statues, perhaps including the one of Isis* found in the portico. Various service and worship rooms open along the portico, while the inside contains a well in the northeast corner, the purgatorium (fenced area with water basin used in purification rites), and altars. Rich sculptural, stucco and 'fourth style'* painted plaster decorations abounded, detached during the excavation years (1764-1766) and now at the Naples Museum.
Behind the temple of Isis* is the ‘Samnite palaestra’, which a dedication engraved in the Oscan language dates to the second half of the 2nd cent. BC. It has a rectangular layout, with porticos on three sides and a pedestal in the center of the south side, where various award ceremonies were held. Though small, during the Oscan period this space could host athletic competitions among the young people of Pompeii, and meetings by political-military "associations" of adults.
This occupies most of the block (approximately 2,700 m²), and in the 1st cent. BC joined together existing buildings through renovations and redecorating. The name comes from the bronze statue of Apollo the Cithara Player found in the peristyle* (now at the Naples Museum, like the sculptures mentioned later). The building apparently belonged to members of the servant branch of the Popidii family, to which refer three graffiti and two campaign slogans on the house, 45 of their candidacy programs along Via dell’Abbondanza, and portraits found inside the house.

The public and retiring rooms develop around the peristyles*, those for the servants around the atrium, without tablinum*. There are a few bathing rooms, and the central peristyle* contains lovely bronze sculptures of animals that acted as decorative fountains. The bread bakery, pastry shop and tavern attached to the building may be part of the residential complex.
The owner may have been L. Ceius Secundus, mentioned in a campaign message painted on the house's façade. It has a simple layout: the entrance leads to the atrium, from which the other rooms open out; at the back, a corridor between the triclinium* and tablinum* leads to the yard. A staircase with a wall in opus craticium* leads to the upper floor, under construction. The rooms are richly decorated in late ‘third style’*, with floors of signinum opus* and tessellated lavapesta*, which form geometric shapes in the tablinum* between tiles of polychrome marble. The garden is enlarged by the big hunting scene painted on the back wall, while along the sides run landscapes of vaguely Egyptian tenor, according to a decorative fashion widespread during the final years of life in Pompeii, intended to recreate enchanting scenes and distant landscapes in the city.
Built in the 3rd cent. BC and later expanded to over 1,800 m², over time the house was renovated (2nd cent. BC - 1st cent. AD), moving its fulcrum to the peristyle*. It may have belonged to the *Poppaei* family, related to *Poppaea Sabina*, Nero's second wife. The atrium Tuscanicum (with roof supported by beams) has a marble *impluvium*, paintings in ‘fourth style’* and a small temple for worshipping the *Lares* (family protectors) and the *Genius*, the life spirit of the head of the household. In the room to the left of the entrance are three ‘fourth style’* paintings with scenes from the Trojan war; in the 'green hall’ (opening onto the peristyle*) is a fresco with cherubs among grapevines, and with the humorous tale of the wedding of Hippodamia, as well as the lovely colored mosaic with a scene from the Nile, made of tiny tiles. One of the painted niches of the peristyle* depicts the Greek playwright Menander; from whom the house takes its name. The bath area, in the process of being restored at the time of the eruption (79 AD), has a courtyard with four columns, dressing room, and *caldarium* (warm room): here the mosaic depicts sea creatures and Negroid figures, and at the entrance a servant offering unguent containers.
One important trade in Pompeii was that of the *fullones*, or fullers: 13 laboratories processed raw wool, 7 handled spinning and weaving, 9 dyeing, and 18 washing. A typical example is the ‘fullonica of Stephanus’ (mentioned in a campaign message on the façade: was he the owner or manager?), formed by remodelling an existing house and using the ground floor for work activities, the upper floor as a dwelling and for drying the cloth. At the back of the building is a series of tubs used for washing: the *fullones* trampled the cloth in a mixture of water and soda (soap was unknown at that time) or urine, both degreasing substances due to their high ammonia content.
The opus quadratum* façade shows how ancient this house is: the earthquake of 62 AD forced renovations that were still in progress at the time of the eruption. Delightful 'fourth style'* decorations, figurative paintings with a mythological theme and still lifes, brighten the rooms. The lararium ‘of Achilles’ owes its name to the figures, in relief and painted on a blue background, showing the final episodes of the Trojan war: the duel between Achilles and Hector, the Trojan's death, the return of his corpse in a cart to his elderly father Priam, escorted by Hermes.
This dates from the 2nd cent. BC and occupies most of the block. The entrance is followed by a closed environment decorated in ‘first style’* (the painted imitation gate, in ‘second style’*, hides the point where a previous doorway was closed). The servants' quarters include the kitchen and painted lararium, to worship the *Lares* (domestic divinities): these are depicted at the top, with the snake *agathodemone* (protector of the hearth) and the *Genius*, protector of the head of the household. The peristyle* contains plaster casts of wooden wardrobes and doors of the house. We can admire paintings attributed to the late ‘third style’*, on a white background. In the triclinium* is the famous painting of a mythological subject, illustrating the torments inflicted on Dirce by Amphion and Zetus: the former was guilty of mistreating their mother, and was therefore tied to a raging bull for punishment. In this room, excavators found a pile (perhaps due to the construction under way in the house) of valuable tableware, and a bronze statue of Apollo, holding what may be a tray in his arms.
The rooms open onto the peristyle*, from which one may enter the large garden that once grew beans, perhaps onions and cabbage, grapes, exotic plants (from the 1st cent. BC to the 1st cent. AD cherry, peach, apricot, and pistachio trees spread from the Orient) whose seeds or seedlings were kept in 28 terracotta vases found along the boundary wall, and lemons, seemingly introduced by the Hebrews and held in high regard for their medicinal qualities, for rinsing one’s mouth, and protecting stored clothes from insects. Animals were raised in the stalls at the back of the garden. The house takes its name from the graffito on the north wall of the peristyle*, depicting a cargo ship labelled EUROPA (alluding to the Greek heroine kidnapped at sea by Jupiter disguised as a bull).
This is a large space cultivated as a vineyard, which houses the plaster casts of a few of the victims from 79 AD, overcome by the fury of the eruption while they sought an escape. The director of the Pompeii digs from 1860 to 1875, Giuseppe Fiorelli, introduced the plaster cast method that is still essentially the same one used today: liquid plaster is poured into the cavity left in the bed of ashes by the gradual decomposition of the victim's body. As the plaster solidifies, it reproduces the body's shape. The vineyard also contains a triclinium*, with masonry couches for dining outdoors.
The original layout conforms to the 'row house' style (3rd cent. BC), widespread in regions I and II: the entrance has bedrooms on either side (cubicula) and leads to the courtyard acting as an atrium. From here a corridor flanked by other rooms leads to the hortus (garden) at the back of the house. The enormous yard in the back was organized in the mid-1st cent. BC, replacing as many as 5 'row house' dwellings of the time: paleo-botanical analyses confirm that the land was primarily used to grow herbal essences suitable for making fragrances, thus the owner was likely to have been a perfumer. In the middle of the east wall of the garden is a brick triclinium* for dining outdoors: next to it, an altar and an aedicula dedicated to worshipping Hercules, of whom a marble statue was found, giving the house its name.
The house, also known as that of Loreio Tiburtino, belonged to D. Octavius Quartio, as evidenced by the signet ring found at the entrance. It partly retains its original layout (2nd cent. BC): the bedrooms (cubicula) and triclinium* open onto the atrium, the heart of the dwelling. The side towards the Amphitheater, renovated after 62 AD, still has a garden lush with greenery and ponds, imitating country residences, according to the 'villa living' fashion typical of the time. This 'parkland' is divided into two long pools (euripi) arranged in a 'T'. The porticoed upper euripus was decorated with statues alluding to Egypt, homeland of the goddess Isis*: in the center is a sacellum with fountains, at the back a double bed for outdoor dining, and a cave-like niche, decorated with frescoes in mythological themes. The lower euripus, divided into three basins (perhaps for fish), extends across the entire garden and was traversed by tree-lined lanes, recently restored.
Damaged by one of the bombs that fell on Pompeii in 1943, and uncovered in 1952, this house seems to be built over an older one, with a larger peristyle* and triclinium* and new arrangement of the rooms, which go almost all the way around the garden. The house was made famous by the beautiful painting on the south wall: a lush garden, filled with flora and fauna, with a low transenna and other decorative elements spread across three panels. To the right is a fountain basin painted with birds, to the left a statue of Mars. A center window gives the illusion of opening onto the sea, where the goddess Venus lies with two cherubs in a pink seashell, practically thrust towards Pompeii, of whom she was protectress. Although clumsily painted, the composition is not lacking in dramatic effect if viewed from a certain distance.
Amphitheater

Built (approximately 70 BC) by the duumvirs* Q. Valgus and M. Porcius, this is one of the oldest and best preserved amphitheaters in existence, and held over 20,000 spectators. The auditorium is divided into three sectors: the ima cavea (front row) for important citizens, and the media and summa, higher up, for everyone else. A velarium, or awning, was often spread over the stands to protect spectators from the sun. The building was used for gladiator battles. Two gates opened onto the main axis of the arena: participants in the games paraded in through one gate, while the dead or injured were carried away through the other. In 59 AD, a violent riot broke out between ‘fans’ from Pompeii and Nocera, and the field was 'disqualified' for 10 years (a provision cancelled after the earthquake in 62 AD): the outbreak may have disguised some resentment towards Nocera by Pompeii, since the former had recently become a colony and absorbed part of its territory.
This large, rectangular building with porticos along three sides and a pool in the center is from the Augustan period: it provided an exercise park for the youth associations promoted by the emperor's propaganda, and here the latter was worshipped in a room at the center of the west portico. Along the portico, a double row of sycamores (of whose roots plaster casts have been made) ensured an additional area of shade. The portals on the east side were damaged by the earthquake in 62 AD, and were rebuilt in opus latericium*. At the time of the eruption, the north wall had collapsed and recently been restored; on the south side is the entrance to a latrine, cleaned by water carried from the pool by a canal.
Immediately outside Porta Nocera is the necropolis, of considerable importance, with its exedra* and aedicula tombs. The funerary building, dating from the Tiberian period (14-37 AD) is architecturally imposing, built by Eumachia, priestess of Venus, for herself and her family members: the exedra* stands on a high terrace, with the burial chamber and fence in the back. The structure, in opus caementicium*, was covered with Nocera tufa and divided into niches with statues, separated by half columns and crowned with a decorated frieze. The tomb was inserted between two other previously existing aedicula burial sites, from the late Republican period, consisting of a podium supporting the cell containing the statues of the dead.
The current gate in the southeastern sector of the defensive walls dates from the 4th cent. BC, immediately after the Samnites conquered Pompeii, although it was restored in later periods: it is called "Nocera" because it stands at the beginning of the road leading to the city of the same name. Generally speaking, the gate resembles those of Stabia and Nola: on the city side, a single barrel-vaulted room that contained the actual gate itself, followed by a corridor with two bastions at either end to protect the entrance. It is built with blocks of limestone, and appears very tall due to the fact that the road bed was later lowered. The adjacent walls are made of blocks of limestone and tufa, on the interior, and limestone on the exterior, with an embankment where the patrol walkway ran.
Porta Nola owes its name to the fact that it opened onto the road leading to the Nola countryside. An inscription in the Oscan language (no longer present) on the façade of the gate attributes its construction to the meddix tuticus (supreme functionary) Vibio Popidio (approximately 3rd cent. BC). It has surfaces of opus quadratum, consisting of rows of tufa blocks, and a barrel vault in opus caementicium. In the keystone of the internal arch is a sculpture of Minerva's head, almost as though to place the entrance to the city under the goddess's protection. The outer gate is preceded by two bastions fitted into the walls: these were intended to force any attackers to come out into the open in order to cross a dangerous gorge. The south section of the walls, to the right leaving the city, was rebuilt to approximately 100 m in opus caementicium, perhaps after 100 BC. The north section instead retains its dual structure, with limestone base and upper portion in tufa.
East of the road leaving the city through Porta Nola is a burial area with three tombs. The one with a squared fence is of M. Obellio Firmo, among the most important figures in the final years of Pompeii: inside the fence was a stele, the glass urn containing the ashes, the forum for libations, and the remain of the stake. The other two tombs are the exedra* type: one anonymous, the other that of Aesquilia Polla, wife of N. Herennius Celsus, an influential person in the Augustan period. At the center is a podium with an Ionic column, topped by a marble urn, which in burial symbolism was supposed to contain the blessed water to bathe the dead.
This large dwelling, with more than 60 rooms, combines two existing houses (late 3rd-2nd cent. BC) with entrances at numbers 14 and 16: its current appearance dates from after the earthquake in 62 AD, when the external façade (opus reticulatum*) and the walls of n. 16 were rebuilt, and the latter became the main house (it is the only one open to the public today). Resting against the southwestern slopes of the city, scenically positioned, it has the typical entrance sequence: atrium (among the largest in Pompeii), with a square impluvium*, tablinum* leading to the portico, and the large peristyle*. Of particular interest is the surviving floor decoration, in signinum opus* and a lovely black-and-white mosaic in geometric patterns.
Characteristic and very widespread in Pompeii (there were 89), the thermopolia were public establishments (a sort of ‘snack-bar’) that served hot food and drinks (thus the Greek-style name): it was indeed not customary to have lunch (prandium=midday meal) at home. This is a typical, simple structure: one room opening onto the road, with a brick tap—often decorated—into which were sunk the dolia (jars) containing the goods; at times, one could eat one’s meal sitting down in the back rooms. In this thermopolium, note the stuccoed and frescoed lararium (aedicula): on either side of the master’s Genius are the Lares (protectors of the house), as well as Mercury (god of trade) and Dionysus (god of wine). The house annexed to the shop has an interesting triclinium* decorated in late ‘third style’*.
Characteristic and very widespread in Pompeii (there were 89), the *thermopolia* were public establishments (a sort of ‘snack-bar’) that served hot food and drinks (thus the Greek-style name): it was indeed not customary to have lunch (*prandium*=midday meal) at home. This is a typical, simple structure: one room opening onto the road, with a brick tap—often decorated—into which were sunk the *dolia* (jars) containing the goods: at times, one could eat one’s meal sitting down in the back rooms.
Memorial Arches

In opus latericium*, at one time covered with marble, these elegantly enclose the Forum to the north, in celebration of the imperial family. Of the two built on either side of the Temple of Jupiter, the one to the west is attributed to Augustus, the east to Nero, perhaps demolished following the death (68 AD) and sentencing of the emperor; or simply to avoid blocking the view of the other arch behind it, at the north entrance to the Forum. This has two niches on one side that once held statues of Nero and Drusus, on the other side two fountains; an equestrian statue (perhaps of the emperor Tiberius) topped this arch. The other arch, in the back at the start of Via di Mercurio, is called the Caligula Arch because an equestrian statue was found nearby, that may have depicted the emperor Caligula and probably stood on the arch.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Glossary</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>compluvium:</strong> opening in the center of the roof of the atrium in the house, which conveyed water into the impluvium*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>decurion:</strong> member of the city Senate, usually a former administrator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>duumvirs:</strong> the city’s administrators and highest judges, two of whom were elected every year, and who subsequently became members of the city senate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>exedra:</strong> an extension of the apse used as a room for sitting and conversing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>first style:</strong> painted wall decoration (3rd cent. BC - early 1st cent. BC), also known as ‘structural’, which imitates a wall in opus quadratum* or covered with marble slabs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>fourth style:</strong> painted wall decoration (second half of the 1st cent. AD), also known as ‘fantastic’, which expands the architectural imagination of the ‘second style’* and the decorative tone of the ‘third style’*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>impluvium:</strong> a low basin in the center of a household atrium, into which rainwater flowed down from the roof through the compluvium*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Isis:</strong> Egyptian goddess of nature, bride of Osiris and mother of Horus, depicted with horns or a cow’s head. The worship of Isis and Serapides, taken up by the Ptolemaic Egyptians in the 3rd century BC, spread to Italy at the end of the following century (the Serapeum in Pozzuoli dates from 105 BC) and attracted a number of followers, especially from the lower classes, to whom it promised salvation after death in return for worshipping the mysteries of Isis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>lavapesta:</strong> flooring made of ground lava bound with sand and lime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>libertus:</strong> freed slave, whose children were free citizens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>metope:</strong> sculpted or painted rectangular element, placed between two triglyphs in a Doric frieze</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>opus africanum:</strong> a building technique in which horizontal and vertical rows of large blocks act as a border, filled in with smaller stones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>opus caementicium:</strong> building technique in which the mortar was made up of a mixture of sand or crushed stones and lime</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **opus craticium:** economical building technique with square wooden frames filled with...
crushed rocks, bound together with lime and mud

**opus incertum:** building technique in which the structure was made up of two outer beds of medium-sized stones—all the same kind or mixed—and filled with opus caementicium*

**opus latericium:** building technique with a core of opus caementicium* and a facing made of tiles or bricks of different sizes laid in regular, overlapping rows

**opus quadratum:** building technique in which large square blocks were laid in regular ashlar courses, without mortar

**opus reticulatum:** building technique with a core of opus caementicium*, covered with small pyramidal blocks arranged with their points embedded in the wall and exposed square bases forming a net-like diagonal pattern

**peristyle:** garden surrounded by a colonnade of porticos

**pulvinar:** architectural element atop a capital, acting as a support and occasionally decorated

**second style:** painted wall decoration (early 1st century BC - 20 BC), also known as ‘architectural’, which depicts and creates buildings not with stucco, but using lines painted artistically with regard to perspective.

**sectile opus:** decoration of floors or walls with marble tiles that outline geometric or figurative patterns

**signinum opus:** powered terracotta, mixed with lime and sand, used to cover floors and walls to keep out moisture

**tablinum:** a public room of the home, between the atrium and the peristyle*

**telamons:** sculpted architectural supports depicting male figures

**third style:** painted wall decoration (20 BC-50 AD), also known as ‘ornamental’, that divides the surface into precise vertical and horizontal sections by means of plant or linear architectural elements, in the center of which are decorative motifs and decorated panels

**triclinium:** dining room, where people seated on couches along three sides of the room

**triglyph:** element of a Doric frieze, alternated with the metope*, characterized by three vertical grooves
This small guide collects short introductions for visiting the most important dig sites. Some of them can be temporarily closed.
POMPEI
ERCOLANO
BOSCOREALE
OPLONTIS
STABIA

Ministero dei Beni e delle Attività Culturali e del Turismo