



Rich Peoples' Roman Homes

How the other half lived

Roman Houses

The Romans built lots of cities that were well fortified with city walls. They also introduced lots of luxuries into civilisation, such as public baths, roads and even plumbing!

As a Roman, the type of house you would live in would depend on whether you were rich or poor and whether you lived in the town or the country.

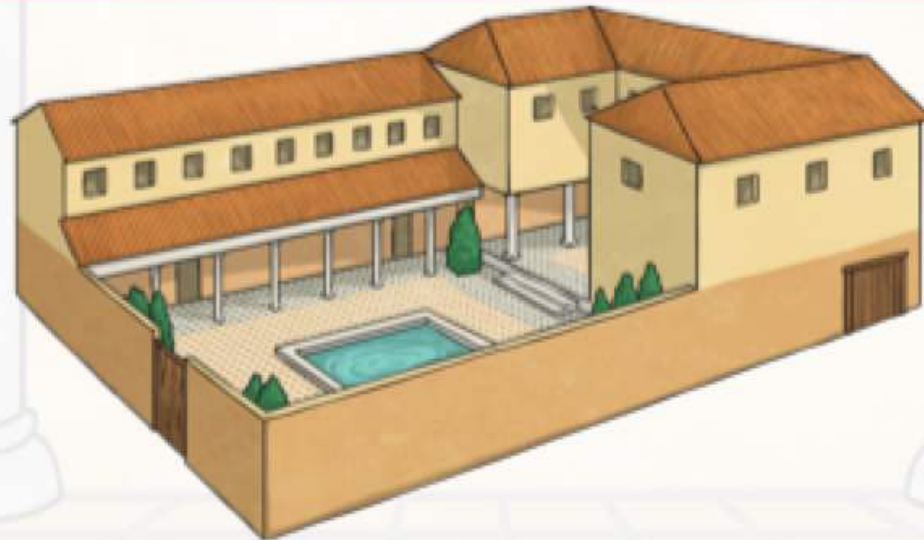


Domus: Wealthy and influential Romans owned larger and more opulent housing complexes in the cities called 'Domus'. A typical domus had a door towards the street that opened into an entrance hall that led to a courtyard called 'Atrium'. Atrium was a central hall with rooms all around it. The master of the house known as Dominus had his and his family's rooms all around the atrium.

Atrium either had no roof or a hole in the roof to serve as a sky light and an opening to allow rain water to fall through it and get collected in a reservoir in the center of the atrium floor. There were multiple rooms in a domus, which were used for different purposes. Beyond an atrium centered complex was the rear portion of the house which was centered on a garden or backyard called 'Peristyle'. The rooms around peristyle were toilets, kitchens, stores and slave quarters. Romans decorated their rooms with colored plaster walls and mosaics. Mosaics were expensive and only the very rich could afford them.

Domus

A domus was a type of house in the city in which a rich Roman would have lived.



A domus was a very grand single-storey building, often with marble pillars, statues and mosaics on walls and floors.

They would have had multiple rooms, including bedrooms, a dining room, kitchen, courtyards, gardens and places to relax and entertain guests.

Chedworth Hall Villa



<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0114s0b>

Villa: A Roman villa was a country home used by wealthy Romans. Villas were larger than domus as countryside offered more space for building residence compared to overly populated cities like Rome, where there was always a dearth of available space. A villa normally had three parts. The first part was Villa Urbana, where the dominus and his family lived. This part was decorated with mosaics and frescoes and was very similar to the urban residences of rich Romans. The second was Villa Rustica, where slaves and other workers of the villa resided. This part also housed stores, prison and a barn for farm animals. The third part was Villa Fructuaria, where the farm produce was stored. This part also had a temple and a dining room in some cases.

Villa

A Roman villa was a luxurious estate for rich Romans in the countryside.



They were much larger and more comfortable than a domus and had even more rooms, including servants quarters and exercise rooms.

Some villas even had underfloor heating! A hypocaust was a system which pumped hot air from a fire around a system of tunnels underneath the villa's main floor.

Fishbourne Palace



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