

0. A SOPHISTICATED TOWN - Story Preface

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In this image we see the "Street of the Tombs," as it appeared sometime between circa 1890 and circa 1900. This illustration helps us to understand how the people of Pompeii laid-out their roads. Picture from the Detroit Publishing Co., Catalogue J Foreign Section. [Online via the Library of Congress](#). Click on the image for a better view.

Surprisingly sophisticated, Pompeii was laid out in a grid. It had a three-stream running water system. One stream went to public fountains, another to public baths and a third traveled to homes of wealthy residents. People in Pompeii even had a version of indoor plumbing, but they did not have a good sewer system.

Flowing through lead pipes from a central water tower (called the Castellum Aquae), the water delivery system was ingenious for its day. (Follow the link to see how Pompeii's engineers directed three different water streams from the *Castellum Aquae*.)

When water supplies were low, the town stopped the flow of water streams in order of priority. First the wealthy homes were without water, then the public baths. Public fountains were shut down last.

People in ancient times used mill wheels to grind flour, and they stored food in large terra-cotta jars. To maintain the food at constant temperatures, all but the top of a jar was buried in the ground.

Pompeii had outdoor food bars where its citizens could enjoy a snack and a cool drink. Shops were clearly marked with carved signs: A goat for the dairy, grapes for the winery, bread for the bakery. In the baker's house one could find a fresco of a man selling bread.

The fertile, volcanic slopes of Vesuvius (the link takes you to NASA's satellite view) provided an ideal climate for grapes and olive groves. (Follow the link to view an olive press uncovered in Pompeii.)

Since the mountain had last erupted long before anyone alive at the time had been born, people must have thought living near the most recognizable landmark looming over the Bay of Naples was completely safe.

They were wrong.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/A-SOPHISTICATED-TOWN-Pompeii>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/A-SOPHISTICATED-TOWN-Pompeii>



Pompeii City Grid

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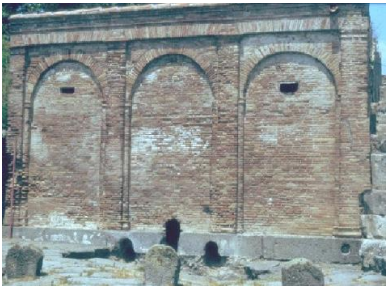
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Lead Pipes of Pompeii

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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Pompeii Water Tower

Image online, courtesy "Latin and Greek," (a [Dutch-language website](#)).

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Directed Water Streams in Pompeii

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Food Storage in Pompeii

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Buried Food Jars in Pompeii

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Grape Storage near Vesuvius

Image, and information, online courtesy "[Explore Italian Volcanoes.](#)"

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Olive Press Uncovered in Pompeii

Image, described above, online via Catholic Resources.org

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Vesuvius Looming over the Bay of Naples

Photo by Jeff Matthews, in 2006. Released into the public domain by the photographer. Online, via Wikimedia Commons.

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