

Antiquarium of Boscoreale



Man and environment in the vesuvian area



POMPEII
SOPRINTENDENZA
POMPEI
BOSCOREALE

VISIT US HERE

Via Settetermini, viale Villa Regina – Locality Villa Regina
Boscoreale (Na) - Tel./Fax 081.5368796

TIMETABLE

From April the 1st to October the 31st Everyday from 8.30 am to 7.30 pm
(last logged 6 pm) 1st November – 31st Marzo: Everyday
from 8.30 am to 6.30 pm (last logged 5 pm)
Closing day: January 1 – May 1 – December 25

GETTING HERE

Car

from Napoli:

Autostrada A3 Napoli-Salerno - Torre Annunziata sud exit

from Salerno:

Autostrada A3 - Boscoreale exit

TICKETS

Single Entrance with access to 3 sites

(Boscoreale, Oplonti, Stabia) - valid for 1 day

Full price ticket: € 5,50 – Reduced price ticket: € 2,75

Single Entrance with access to 5 sites

(Pompei, Ercolano, Oplonti, Stabia, Boscoreale) - 3 days validity

Full price ticket: € 20,00 – Reduced Price Ticket: € 10,00

Free entrance:

EU Citizens younger than 18yo

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ANTIQUARIUM of BOSCOREALE

Man and environment in the vesuvian area

The National Antiquarium "*Man and environment in the territory of Vesuvius*" was inaugurated in March 1991, it is located in the archaeological area adjacent to Villa Regina, it is divided into two rooms: in the first one are displayed some archeological findings from the Vesuvius area that allow you to rebuild the environment and the economy of the Roman period, before the eruption of Vesuvius in 79 A.D. which destroyed the centers of Pompeii, Herculaneum, Oplontis (Torre Annunziata) and villas of Stabiae (Castellammare di Stabia).The second room (II) shows the main findings of Boscoreale's territory characterized by many farms and villas.



FIRST ROOM

The environment. A statue of the Sphinx, ancient guardian and symbol of power, welcomes the visitors. The Vesuvius area is characterized by the cone of Vesuvius, enclosed in the ancient volcanic area of Monte Somma. The copy of a Pompeian fresco, from the House of the Centenary and now at the Archaeological Museum of Naples, shows the volcanic cone as it was before the eruption of 79 A.D. In the show cases 1-2 finds report the exploitation of the sea: marine fauna species (mussels, limpets, sea urchins, cowries, fish) used as food, tools and amulets; fishing tackle (hooks, a fishing net, hairpins networks); a fragment of an amphora with *garum*, the the favoured fish sauce by the Romans, and also produced in Pompeii; botanical species growing along the coast (pines rushes, reeds). A fresco from Pompeii with sailing Venus, the copy of a pompeian mosaic with fishes and the reconstruction of the coastal environment.

The plain. The second exhibition area represents the territory's witnesses at the foot of Vesuvius. The flat area was crossed by the Sarno River, personified in a pompeian fresco, in the picture; the river waters were populated by edible molluscs (show case 3). A well preserved cypress trunk of 79 D.C., which





was recovered in recent years, can be seen from the window. The area was really fertile and was cultivated with tools such as shovels, spades, hoes, of various shapes and sizes (show case 4). A wicker basket from *Herculaneum* and a hay sample found in the Villa of *Oplontis* (Villa B), represent some plant species, highlighted with animals ones, in the reconstruction of the environment. Agricultural lands were divided into plots based on an orthogonal grid of *cardines* and *decumani* by *agrimensores*, the ancient land surveyors. One of them, the pompeian *Numerius Popidius Nicostratus*, has his tombstone displayed, on it we can see engraved his tools: the *groma*, an ancient tool for agricultural measurements, including a reconstruction scale 1:1, the poles and the wire lead.

The hills. The hillside cultivations are exemplified by the third exhibition sector evidences (show cases 5-6). The slopes of the volcano were mainly cultivated with vineyards, as showed by the fresco of Vesuvius. This is also highlighted by the exhibits: wine grapes, two samples of wine amphorae, one domestic and the other for transport, and a glass jug. Several varieties of grapevine were cultivated and the importance of the wines produced was also celebrated by the latin writers. The cultivation of the vine was not the only agricultural activity performed at the feet of Vesuvius, therefore especially on the slopes of the Lattari mountains, the olive and fruit were cultivated. These agricultural activities were also proved by finds such as amphore and specific containers, as well as remains of olives and olive oil and a peach pit. A grass sample



found in Terzigno witnesses the existence of cultivated fields interchanged with other crops. The reconstruction of the environment presents the threshing floor of a rustic villa from Roman times, with courtyard animals and its rural landscape.

The mountains. The top of Vesuvius was covered by forests inhabited by wild animals, deer, roe deer, wild boars, birds and small mammals, as it is shown by the reconstruction of the environment; woods exploitation provided timber, mushrooms, berries, fruits and medicinal plants; thanks to hunting meat, bone and horn to make amulets and tools, furniture hinges, nuts, spindles, spoons was available (show case 7).

The wood, obtained by cutting and stripping bare the trees with pruning hooks, hatchets and axes of iron, was used taking into account the specific characteristics of the various essences. Two examples of ancient wood are displayed in the show case 8: the first is a wax tablet, which was found with others in a building at the periphery of Pompeii; on its surface, covered by wax, it is written with a pointed *stylus* an accounting document; the other is a fragment of the trunk of a cypress, found near Pompeii buried eruption of 79 A.D. The oak galls were used for tanning and dyeing instead.

Urban Green: As in the surrounding area, as well as within the ancient city, the man-nature relationship was very tight. The houses presented green spaces of various sizes, consisting of orchards and gardens, populated by animals and marble furnishings, as it is confirmed, in addition to the findings of

the show case 9, also depictions of gardens that decorated the walls of some houses faithfully reproduce real gardens.

It is the case of wall decorations that adorned a room of the house of the Gold bracelet in Pompeii, which depicts exactly numerous animal and plant species, as well as furniture such as fountains and marble

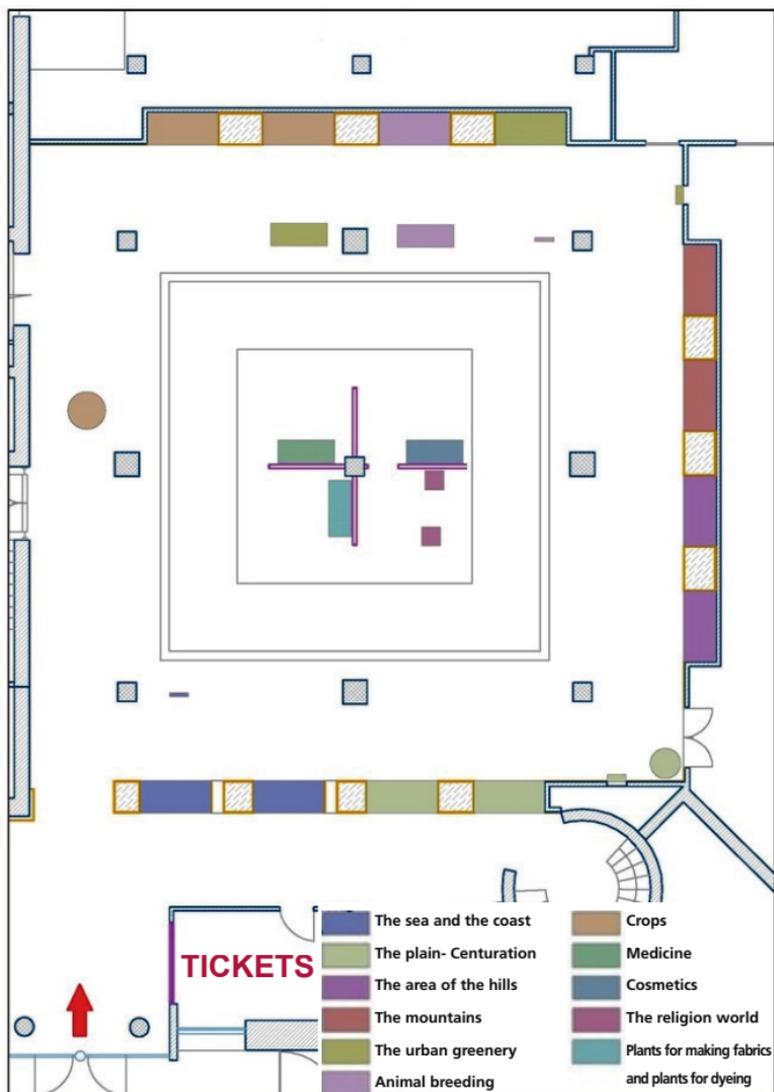


statues, enclosed by a fence of reeds, so that the owner had the illusion of being in a rich garden.

Crops and livestock:The main economic activities of the Vesuvius area were agriculture and livestock. The finds displayed (show case 10) show the presence of poultry (eggs), sheep (bells, horns, cheese), cattle (horns, cowbells), horses (elements trappings, oats, cover vegetable fiber and iron hooves). The big clay container is particular: it is a *glirarium*, for the breeding of dormice, considered delicious by roman gourmets. A cast of pork from rustic villa close to the museum and the famous plaster cast of a guard dog (*canis catenarius*) found in Pompeii in *Marcus Vesonius Primus* House (show cases 13-14) complete the field. These cast are manufactured with the technique developed in the 19th century, which allows to retrieve bodies' shapes and other decomposing organic remains that leave a vacuum in the consolidated ash layer while decomposing.

Subsequent windows contain a sampling of the principal cultivated plants: cereals, legumes, vegetables and fruits, they are associated with a number of working tools, two grinders, a scythe, a *modius*, bronze and glass furnishings, and one of

MAP OF I ROOM



MAP OF II ROOM





the bread loaves found in an oven of Pompeii. In the middle of the room, in four sectors, some particular uses of plant species in the ancient world, exemplified by its tools.

The medicine: Glass bottles of different sizes were used to prepare the dilutions for the composition of medicaments of vegetable or animal origin, obtained by crushing the components in a marble mortar; a choice of surgical instruments in bronze complete the showcase.

Perfumes and cosmetics: it is reconstructed a female dresser with a mirror, a comb, tweezers, some little spatulas and a series of perfume flake of various forms used for scented creams and ointments, obtained from vegetable extracts and oils of different species.

Plants and sacred animals: Plants were also used during religious rituals. This is demonstrated by the bronze portrait of a young man adorned with a floral crown and a priestly bandage, from a house of Pompeii, and a clay jar with the representation of fruits and animals, found in a place of worship in Pompeii, So called the "Magical rites Complex".

Textile and dyeing species: Tissue samples and plant and animal fibers, found in Vesuvian cities; some plants and a mollusc, the *murex*, provided the colours for dyeing fabrics.



SECOND ROOM

The villas of Boscoreale. The hilly area in the north of Pompeii was particularly fertile in the ancient times and was scattered with manufacturing plants, and the residence of the owner, the *dominus*, the so called *Urban pars*, was often a large and luxurious area. Most of these villas were excavated in the late 19th and the early 20th century by private people; excavations were aimed at the recovery of the furnishings and wall and floor decorations; therefore the buildings were generally reburied. Recent excavations, conducted according to scientific criteria, enabled the total recovery of other archaeological sites and the reconstruction of the contexts and the surrounding environment instead.

Villa proprietie of D'Acunzo: partly excavated in 1903 and subsequently reinterred, the villa, located in the suburbs of Boscoreale, is characterized by the presence, at the entrance, of a selling point of fund products and a refreshment stand. Among the finds they found a number of deities in bronze statuettes, now in Baltimore (USA) and an interesting vase clay donut-shaped, decorated with beaded berries and leaves, now at the Archaeological Museum of Naples.

Villa Regina: discovered in 1977 during some construction work, the villa underwent careful excavations, which were completed in 1980. The complex, small in size, is centered on a wine cellar that hosts 18 clay containers (*dolia*) underground for storing wine, made from grapes in the must press produced in the vineyards





surrounding the villa and of which it was possible to rebuild the plant. The overall capacity of *dolia* was about 10.000 liters of wine. Regarding the *urban pars*, the only formal room was the *triclinium*, a dining room, adorned with paintings of the fourth style. Among the objects found, displayed in the show cases 1 and 2, there are also a small marble herm of the god Bacchus, a *lararium* from the porch, tableware and kitchen, some lamps, including one (n. 5), dating from the III-IV century A.D., which

shows that the site was frequented even after the eruption of 79 A.D. In the villa was also found a carriage cart (*plaustrum*) and a pig, which was possible to perform a cast, exposed in the first room.

Villa of Publius Fannius Synistor: the villa, excavated between 1899 and 1903, is known for the magnificent wall paintings in II style, dated between 50 and 40 B.C., preserved in various Italian and foreign museums. The frescoes of *cubiculum* n. 9 are reproduced almost life-size, now preserved in the Metropolitan Museum of New York; of considerable interest are the frescoes of the hall n. 5, with great mythical and historical figures alluding to the birth of Alexander the Great and his conquest of Asia. The reproduction of one panel of these frescoes is exposed now at the Archaeological Museum of Naples. In the central window there is a bronze vessel, within the edge is engraved the capacity of the container and the name of *Publius Fannius Synistor*, owner of the complex. The polychrome floor mosaic with geometric pattern in perspective



cubes that decorated the *triclinium* 11 has been recently acquired. The floor mosaic with the gate pattern from the salon H has also been exposed since very short time.

Villa of Pisanella: the large villa, excavated between 1894 and 1898, is reproduced in a plastic at the center of the room. It is famous for

the discovery of the so called "Treasure of Boscoreale": 109 pieces of silver tableware, kept at the Louvre Museum in Paris, which was hidden in an underground environment of the press. The equipment of the villa, dated back to the beginning of I century B.C., consists of an *urban pars*, for the stays of the owner and a small spa area, and a *pars rustica*, for the processing of the agricultural products of the farm. The service areas included both the living quarters of the servitude as well those intended for processing and storage of agricultural products: the bakery with mills for grain, the stable, the wine press, the oil and oil press, the breadbasket for the crusher crops harvested and the wagon, and finally, at the center, the wine cellar intended for storing wine, oil and cereal crops. Among the found objects, displayed in the show cases 5-8, there are tableware and kitchenware, iron tools, bronze buckles, a melted of bone, seals and elements of furniture. The mosaic with wading bird, which was in the calidarium, recently was purchased from the State.



Villa of Numerius Popidius Florus:

explored in 1906, the villa is organized around a porch on which environments, both rustic and residential, are arranged on two floors. The villa dates back to the first century B.C., but now remains in the light only part of the spa district.

The frescoed walls recomposed in Antiquarium were acquired by the State: from the *cubiculum* n. 23 the paintings are in IV style of the middle of the first century A.D. (Nero's age). In *frigidarium* there was a mosaic with a pair of wrestlers, whereas on the doorway there was a welcome sign HAVE SALVE, exposed, in white tiles on the bottom of earthenware. The owner's name, *Numerius Popidius*



Florus, appears on the two slabs of marble with a dedication to protecting deities Jupiter, Venus, Liber and Hercules.

Villa in Via Casone Grotta: one of the recent discoveries in the territory of Boscoreale is the one occurred in 1986, in a roman villa of which was brought to light the domestic shrine only, which is equipped with a niche-larario. Within the villa there was a marbled simulacrum of a female deity in a banquet setting, adorned with precious gold miniature jewelry; they also found a silver plate with a relief depiction of the divinity itself, *Bona Dea* and the other since that are displayed . The main part of the villa dates back to the late Republican period, after the middle of the first century B.C., while the lararium was added in the course of the first century A.D. Even this settlement, like most of the villas of the north Pompeian hinterland, apparently had to be a productive site.



Villa of Marcus Livius Marcellus: discovered in 1928, the villa was given to the family of *Livii* based on the discovery of a bronze seal bearing the name of *Marcus Livius Marcellus*. The villa, only partially investigated, returned among the other finds the ivory plaque decorated in relief.

In the room is temporarily hosted, the marble statue of *Livia* from the Villa of the Mysteries in Pompei.

The exhibit could be subject to changes or extensions.

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Ministero dei Beni e delle Attività Culturali e del Turismo

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