

A Roman Townhouse

Romans lived in towns a very long time ago. Rich Romans had big, fancy houses called domus. These houses were built around a special open space in the middle called an atrium. Rain fell through a hole in the roof into a small pool below. This pool was called an impluvium.

The rooms were arranged around the atrium. There was a kitchen for cooking, bedrooms for sleeping, and a dining room where the family ate together. Romans ate lying down on special couches!

The floors had beautiful pictures made from tiny coloured tiles. These are called mosaics. The walls were painted with bright colours and pictures too.

Rich Romans had slaves who did the cleaning, cooking, and shopping. Poor Romans lived in much smaller, crowded buildings instead.

Questions

1. What is the Roman word for a townhouse?
2. What was the special open space in the middle of the house called?
3. What fell through the hole in the roof?
4. What was the small pool of water called?
5. Name one room you would find in a Roman house.
6. What were the pretty pictures on the floor made from?
7. What were these floor pictures called?
8. What type of colours were used to paint the walls?
9. Who did the cleaning and cooking in a rich Roman's house?
10. Why do you think only rich Romans lived in a domus?



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