

Domestic Life in Imperial Rome

Population of Augustan Rome

	Low	High
<i>Plebs frumentaria</i> + families	520,000	520,000
Freedmen + families	150,000	200,000
Slaves	50,000	200,000
Poor & recent migrants	50,000	150,000
Soldiers and members of elite	20,000	20,000
Total	790,000	1,090,000

Population densities

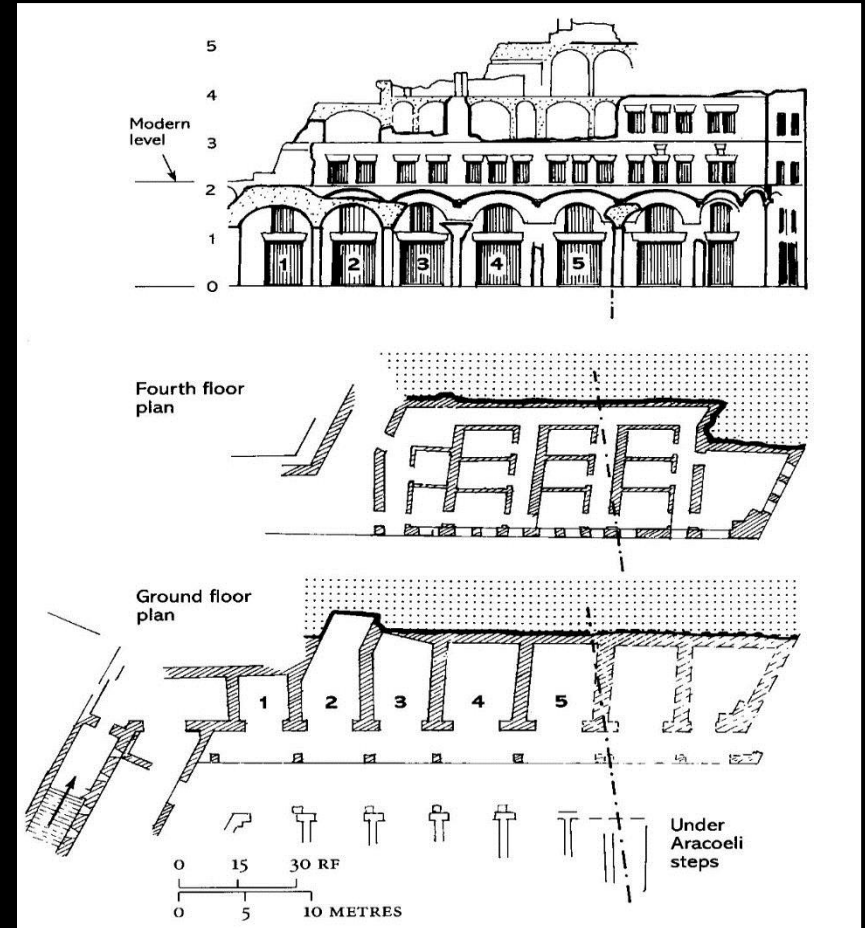
(Population per square mile)

- Rome, ca. 1 BC 188,679?
- Boston 12,172
- New York City 27,532
- Paris, France 53,883
- Delhi, India 75,512
- Manila, Philippines 111,576

The Capitoline Insula, early 2nd c.



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Connolly, Peter, and Hazel Dodge. *The Ancient City: Life in Classical Athens & Rome*. Oxford University Press, 2000. © Oxford University Press. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <https://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/>.

Ulpian, *Digest* 9.3.5.1-2

If the apartment is divided among several tenants, redress can be sought only against that one of them who lives in that part of the apartment from the level of which the liquid has been poured. If the tenant, however, while professing to have sublet, has in fact retained for himself the enjoyment of the greater part of the apartment, he shall be held solely responsible. If, on the other hand, the tenant who professes to have sublet has in fact retained for his own use only a modest fraction of the space, he and his sub-tenants shall be jointly held responsible. The same will hold good if the vessel or the liquid has been thrown from a balcony.

Juvenal 3.190-6

Who at cool Praeneste, or at Volsinii amid its leafy hills, was ever afraid of his house tumbling down?...But here we inhabit a city propped up by slats: for that is how the landlord patches up the crack in the old wall, bidding the inmates sleep at ease under the ruin that hangs above their heads.

Plutarch, *Crassus* 2

And besides this, observing how natural and familiar at Rome were such fatalities as the conflagration and collapse of buildings, owing to their being too massive and close together, he proceeded to buy slaves who were architects and builders. Then, when he had over five hundred of these, he would buy houses that were a fire, and houses which adjoined those that were a fire, and these their owners would let go at a trifling price owing to their fear and uncertainty.



House of the Wooden Partition, Herculaneum



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House of the Faun, Pompeii



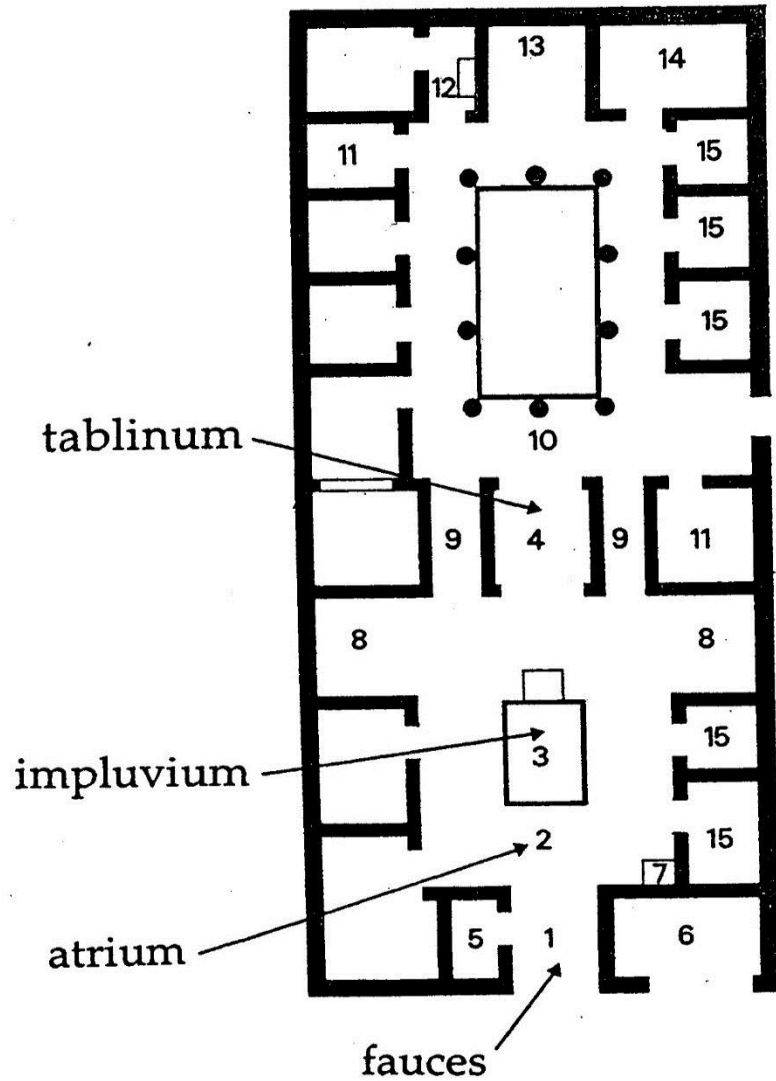


Plate 18 Summary plan of a Roman town house.

- 1 fauces (entrance)
- 2 atrium
- 3 impluvium (basin for rainwater)
- 4 tablinum
- 5 janitor
- 6 taberna (shop)
- 7 lararium (altar of lares)
- 8 alae (wings)
- 9 andron (corridor)
- 10 peristyle
- 11 triclinium
- 12 culina (kitchen)
- 13 exedra (entertaining hall)
- 14 oecus (living-room)
- 15 cubiculum (bedroom)

House of the Tragic Poet, Pompeii



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“Cave Canem”



House of the Faun, Pompeii
Polychromatic marble floor in fauces



House of the Faun, Pompeii
Architectural decoration in fauces

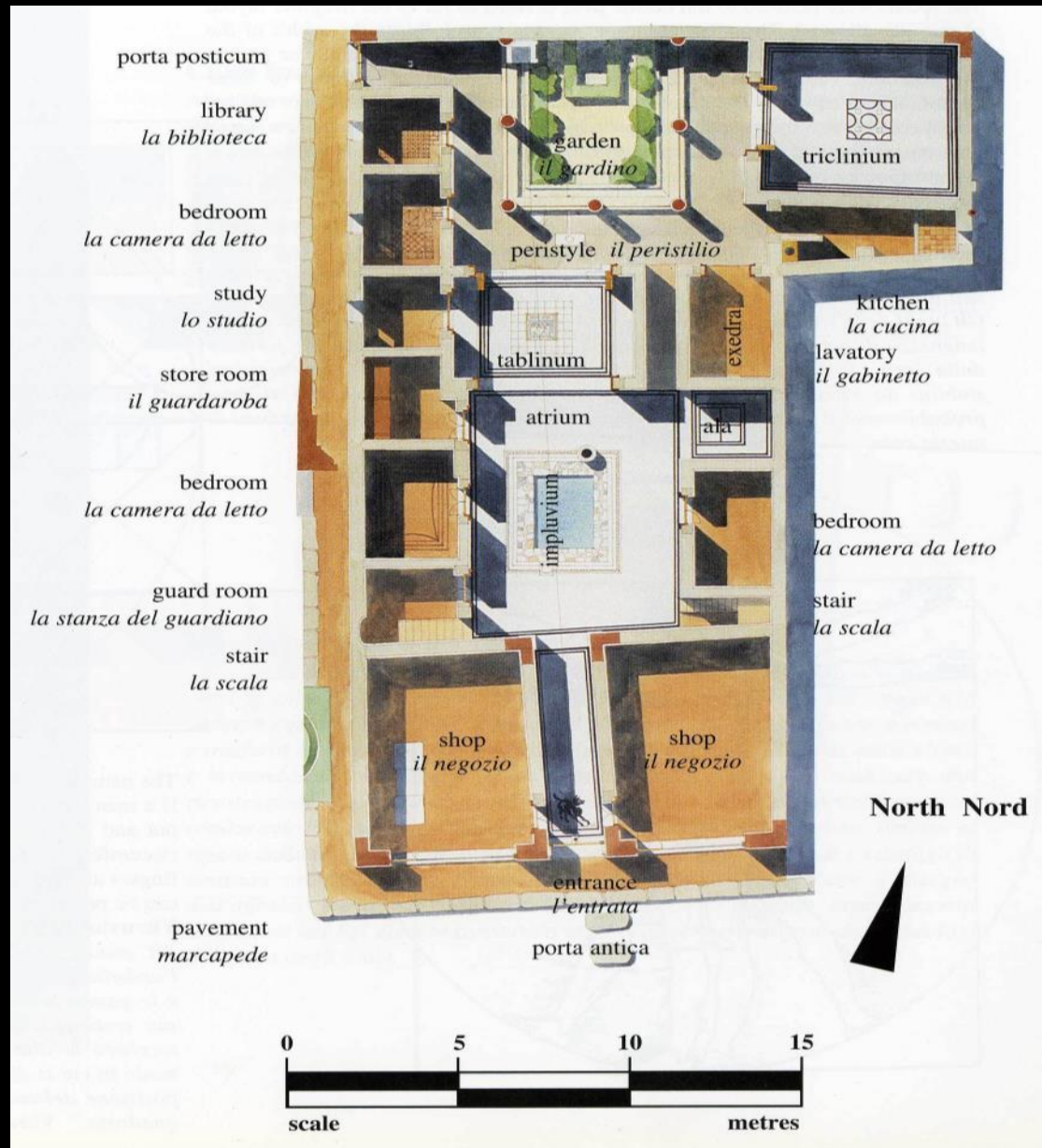
The Atrium



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House of Menander

House of Tragic Poet



Wood, Nicholas. *House of the Tragic Poet: A Reconstruction*. South Hill Press, 1996. © South Hill Press. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <https://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/>. 17



Marriage of Zeus and Hera
House of Tragic Poet
Atrium

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Achilles and Briseis
House of Tragic Poet
Atrium

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House of Paquius Proculus
Pompeii
Atrium



Household Shrine



House of Menander





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Preparation for a play
House of Tragic Poet
Tablinum



House of Paquius Proculus
Pompeii
Tablinum



House of Paquius Proculus
Pompeii
Tablinum mosaic

House of the Wooden Partition, Herculaneum



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House of Menander Pompeii Peristyle garden



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House of the Vettii, Pompeii Peristyle garden

House of the Tragic Poet, Pompeii



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Sacrifice of Iphigenia
House of Tragic Poet
Peristyle

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