



VISIT THE SITE

The skeleton house of Herculaneum

The House of the Skeleton of [Herculaneum](#) is located in Insula III.

It takes its name from the discovery of a skeleton of a man who failed to escape the fury of the eruption of Mount Vesuvius, during the tremendous eruption of the volcano that struck Herculaneum and neighboring towns.

It was October 24, 79 AD (according to the latest findings in Pompeii) when Vesuvius suddenly began erupting ash and lapilli.

Herculaneum, however, due to its location at the foot of the volcano initially was not hit by the incessant rain of lapilli. But it was not hit until later by the mudflows and powerful pyroclastic flow that gave no chance to its inhabitants, including the man found in the skeleton house.

The structure of the skeleton house

The entrance to the house is paved with a beautiful black and white mosaic. From which one enters the atrium of the dwelling of which little remains to be seen, in fact, the skeleton house is one of the few houses in Herculaneum that is not in a good state of preservation.

This is due to the fact that many materials were recovered for reuse during the Bourbon excavations.



The atrium then leads to a series of rooms, including the tablinum. From which one can see an oecus, i.e. a room for parties, characterised by the presence of a curved wall completely frescoed and paved with marble in white, black and antique yellow.



Inside, the skeleton house had a small courtyard, from which air and light once came. To protect the house from thieves and birds that could break into it, an iron grate was made on the roof, which is still partly visible today.

Lararium skeleton house of Herculaneum

In the courtyard decorated with frescos on the walls depicting a garden, a small lararium was found. Made entirely of mosaic and marble tesserae and defined with sea shells, which were widely used at the time.



In addition to this courtyard, the skeleton house also has another somewhat larger one. It is located on the north side and features a wall with a curved niche covered with glass paste and mosaic tesserae was created. Above the niche, which can still be seen today, small panels were made depicting Dionysian scenes.

