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House of the Relief of Telephus of Herculaneum

Telefo's relief house was buried, along with the rest of the ancient city of Herculaneum, during the eruption of Vesuvius in 79 AD.

A 'violent and catastrophic eruption, which submerged Herculaneum with more than 20 meters of mud and a powerful pyroclastic flow.

The ancient city remained imprisoned for centuries under the debris of Vesuvius and was only accidentally rediscovered in 1709 by a farmer while drilling a well. After that day, excavation work continued, bringing to light many remains of the city of Herculaneum.

The atrium of Telefo's Relief House

The house of the telefo relief of [Herculaneum](#) is located in insula V. Named after a high relief found inside the house, depicting the scene of Telefo son of Hercules being cured by Achilles.

It was one of the most sumptuous dwellings in Herculaneum that belonged to Marcus Nonius Balbus. Structured on three floors, whose façade was also visible from the sea.

As soon as one entered, one entered directly into the sumptuous atrium, colonnaded on three sides, with columns made of brick covered with stucco in the classic Pompeian red colour. In the centre was the basin for collecting rainwater, between the various columns were a series of marble discs depicting Dionysian scenes.

From here one accessed the various rooms of the house. Including a series of rooms paved in mosaic that faced directly onto the sea, among which was the beautiful room with marble decorations.

From the atrium one also reached the columned peristyle with 32 columns on all sides and surrounded by a garden.



Structure House of the Relief of Telephus

House of the relief of Telephus had a multi-storey tower, but only the top two floors are well preserved. The penultimate floor was paved in marble and the walls were stuccoed in red and white, while in the top floor we find marble on both floors and walls.

The House had an irregular structure, because it was initially united with the House of the Gem and only later were the two dwellings separated. Furthermore, due to its proximity to the sea, the lower floor of the House was damaged several times, which made it necessary to carry out a series of reconstructions.

The house stood next to the suburban baths. When the extension work on the baths was carried out, part of the rooms of the House of the Relief of Telephus was closed off and attributed to the suburban baths.

