

**Discovery Place
A Day in Pompeii**

An Acoustiguide Tour

*Family Tour
English Version*

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1. Introduction

NARRATOR:

Hi! Welcome to “A Day in Pompeii”!

Pompeii was a city of 20,000 people in Italy that’s famous because of an awful thing that happened. A volcano called Mount Vesuvius erupted and buried the city in dust and ashes. The entire city and surrounding areas were completely covered up and lost for almost seventeen centuries.

Wouldn’t it be cool if you could learn how people lived in Pompeii before the volcano buried their city? Well on this tour... you can!

(SFX - bustling roman city sounds)

And here are your tour guides! Two people who lived in Pompeii in the year 79 -- Lucius and his mom, Portia.

LUCIUS: (boy of 12)

Salve amice! Meum nomen Lucius est.

PORTIA: (his mother)

No Lucius, let’s not speak Latin here.

Hello. We’d love to tell you about life in our city. And the first thing to know is that everyone in Pompeii speaks Latin. But we’ll speak English today.

(SFX fade under)

NARRATOR:

I'm leaving you in good hands, but I'll be back later in the tour.

Right now, please move into the next area. Every time you press a new number you'll be back in time with Lucias and Portia - and hear about daily life in Pompeii. Before you go, if you'd like to hear instructions on how to use your Acoustiguide, just press **4-1-1**, and then the 'Play' button..

411. User Instructions for exSite

It's easy to take your tour of "A Day in Pompeii." Next to some works in the exhibit you'll see a number and **the round family tour symbol**. Just enter that number on your keypad - like using a telephone. Then press the big Play button. **[pause .5]** If you make a mistake, press the button with the square on it two times. Then enter a new number and press 'Play' again. Remember, if you don't press "Play", you won't hear anything.

Look around now for your first number and we'll start the tour!

2. Thermopolium

[SFX: Bustling restaurant ambience]

ACTOR: *“Ok, who’s next? What’ll ya have centurion?”*

How about a nice plate of pork chops?”

LUCIUS:

People in Pompeii love to eat out! Our town has over 300 taverns and restaurants! The word for restaurant is ‘thermopolium’.

Remember, we all speak Latin here.

PORTIA:

A thermopolium is open to the street so people can walk right up to the bar and get a snack or order a whole meal. Especially for breakfast or lunch when we’re in a hurry because you can just stand at the counter and eat.

LUCIUS:

Or you can buy your food and take it away. I guess you could say it’s a Roman fast food restaurant!

PORTIA:

Sometimes a thermopolium has seats in the back too so you can go in and sit down while you eat. See the holes in the counter top? Some cooks put big clay containers of hot food in the holes so you can see what’s on the menu. Or they put big containers of wine in the holes. The main thing people drink is wine – even children. But we usually dilute it with water so it’s not so strong.

LUCIUS:

Mmmmm, I can smell the fish cooking now. We eat a lot of the same things you eat, I bet!

Chicken, pork, and lamb. And eggs, vegetables, bread, cheese. And a lot of fish because

Pompeii is close to the Bay of Naples. Mom... can we order something... please?

3. Food Samples

NARRATOR:

All of this food is carbonized. That means it's as hard as a rock!

SFX: Knock, knock

How did it get this way? Well, at one stage during the eruption of Mount Vesuvius, waves of gases and wet ash rushed down the mountainside into Pompeii. The gases and volcanic materials were so intensely hot that they turned the food and any organic materials they swept over into solid carbon. That process is called carbonization.

It's not exactly the same thing, but it's kind of like when you burn a piece of toast. The black crust is the bread being carbonized.

I'll tell you the names of the carbonized foods found in Pompeii that are in this display. Can you tell what's what? Some are hard to recognize in their carbonized state.

SFX: "Looking music" under / or a sound between each

There's a peach ...

There's a walnut...

There are figs....

There are fava beans... they look like lima beans

There's some barley grain... it looks like rice

There are oyster shells...

.And there are some olives. If you look closely you can see pits mixed in with the olives. The pits show that someone was having a nice meal and eating olives when all of a sudden...the volcano erupted. All they had time to do was run away...fast!

Since I mentioned toast, would you like to see a carbonized loaf of bread? Look around. It's nearby in another case along with two Roman stoves. All of the things you see today give us clues to figure out what people like Lucias and Portia ate and how they lived in Pompeii.

4. Commerce: Fishing

NARRATOR:

In these cases are things you need for fishing like anchors for boats and lots of fishhooks.

Let's find out more from Lucius and Portia.

SFX: CARTS, METAL WHEELS ON STONE...MARKET BUSTLE

LUCIUS:

There are lots of businesses in Pompeii. Fishing is one of the biggest!

SFX:

My father works in the fishing business. And so do many other people in Pompeii.

Sometimes the Bay of Naples looks like it's full of boats!

PORTIA:

We cook fresh fish at home and we eat it in restaurants. And Pompeii is famous for a business that uses fish. The garum business. Garum is a sauce made from mashing up fish into a paste, mixing it with salt, and letting it ferment or sit for a while. Certain cultures like Thai and Vietnamese still use a similar fish sauce in your day... 2000 years after ours!

LUCIUS:

Mmmmm. Garum can make anything taste good! Sometimes they make it from mackerel, sometimes from anchovies. And it's always salty!

PORTIA:

Pompeii makes the best garum around and we sell it all over the vast Roman Empire, the lands that Roman emperors conquer. Pompeii is in the land you call Italy today. But the Roman Empire also includes most of Europe including Britain, countries of North Africa like Egypt, Tunisia, and Morocco, and countries of the Middle East like Israel, Syria, and Iraq. We send garum to all those places in sailing ships loaded with big red containers called Amphora.

Look around and nearby you'll see some amphora.

5. Amphora

NARRATOR:

These big jars are called amphorae. They're made of red clay. Pompeii businesses used amphora to ship garum, olive oil, wine, and sometimes dried fruit. They could get pretty heavy so that's why they have two handles on the top, so two people could lift them together. When the amphorae were loaded on ships, the sailors ran a rope through the handles and tied them all together so they wouldn't bounce around and break.

The red color of the amphora is important. Remember, the amphorae were made of clay. And you could only find this color clay in the soil around Pompeii. So people all over the Roman Empire knew when amphora came from Pompeii.

6. Commerce: Scales

SFX: MARKETPLACE BUSTLE AND VOICES

PORTIA:

Hello again.

Pompeii is a Roman town. And we Romans like to make sure business dealings are fair and square. We do that by using scales like these.

See this big one? Let's say you want to buy a libra of beans.

LUCIUS:

Mom, maybe you should explain what a libra is. I think they use pounds today.

PORTIA:

Oh, good idea Lucius. Today you weigh things in ounces and pounds and one pound has 16 ounces in it. In Pompeii we weigh things in libras, and there are 12 unicas in one libra. Ok, back to the beans we want to buy.

LUCIUS:

No make it figs. I love figs.

PORTIA:

Ok, figs. How do you measure a libra? See those things near the scale? They're weights. Each one has a specific standard weight set by Roman law. So you put the one-libra weight on one side of the scale...and then start piling figs on the other side till the scale is balanced. That's when you know you've got a libra.

LUCIUS:

And then you eat the figs!

PORTIA:

Well, after you pay for them.... with Roman money. Look around in the nearby case and you can see golden and silver and bronze Roman coins from Pompeii. I use the silver and bronze coins for shopping every day. The gold coins are more valuable and we mostly save them.

LUCIUS:

Some of the coins have pictures of Emperors on them, like the emperor Nero and the emperor Augustus. My uncle gave me some gold coins for my birthday. They have a picture of the Emperor Titus. He's the ruler of the whole Roman Empire right now.

7. AFTERLIFE: Female Statue

SFX: Outdoor ambience/ noisy, cart traffic

LUCIUS:

This statue is from one of Pompeii's cemeteries. The cemeteries are just outside the city walls and they are busy, noisy places! Sometimes it's so noisy I think the dead people are going to wake up!

PORTIA:

Lucias! Some respect please. I knew this woman. She was the head of her family and they loved her so much that they had this life-sized statue carved out of marble.

Her clothes show our visitor what a woman of Pompeii wears. The shawl that covers her head is called a stola in Latin. Your English word stole comes from stola. I think she looks very beautiful and dignified.

LUCIUS:

But tell our visitors why the cemeteries are always so busy...and noisy!

PORTIA:

They are noisy because they are right next to main roads, so there's a lot of traffic. It's like having a cemetery right next a big highway in your day. And they are busy places because people in Pompeii often visit the graves of family members who have died. We have feasts right in the cemetery and celebrate our dead relatives. So it's not a sad and quiet place. And we build many statues and monuments to honor our dead. We often carve on a stone the names of family members, the history of the family, and facts about how they lived their lives. You can tell a lot about the living people in Pompeii by visiting the dead ones in the cemetery.

8. RELIGION: Fortuna

NARRATOR:

People in Pompeii were very religious. Like all Romans, they honored many gods and goddesses. This bronze statue of a woman sitting on a throne was very important to the people of Pompeii. She's the Roman goddess of good luck and prosperity. If Fortuna was on your side, you probably would have a prosperous life.

SFX: birds/outdoor ambience

PORTIA:

We have a statue of Fortuna in a shrine at home. And we live close to a big temple in Pompeii where people go to honor Fortuna. It's near the center of the city. There are also temples for many other gods like Bacchus, the god of wine, and Venus, the goddess of love.

LUCIUS:

See the two little figures with fish tails on top of her chair? They show that Fortuna is also the goddess that protects sailors and people who fish...like my father. So she's one of my family's favorite goddesses.

9. Statue of BACCO

NARRATOR:

This is a statue of a Roman god named Bacchus. People in Pompeii especially liked him because he was the god of having a good time. And people who grew grapes for wine also honored Bacchus so that they would have a good harvest.

See the grapes in his hair, and the goblet in his hand? It's called a cantharus in Latin. In his left hand there was probably a long stick with vines wrapped around it. We know that because other statues of Bacchus were found holding a stick. The statue is bronze, but notice his eyes. They're made of ivory and brown colored glass. The people of Pompeii believed that if you honored Bacchus, then he would make sure you had a happy and pleasant life after you died.

It's easy to imagine this statue in the garden of a home in Pompeii, maybe with grapevines growing nearby. And Bacchus also had his own temple in Pompeii where people gathered to honor him.

10. LA CASA: Couch

SFX: dining room sounds.

PORTIA: (yells from distance)

“Lucius, time for dinner! Come and eat.”

LUCIUS:

OK mom. Be right there.

When you eat dinner, do you sit on a chair, at a table? We don't! We eat dinner lying down on a couch like this one.

PORTIA:

Our dining room is called the triclinium. We put three couches around a low table. To eat you lie on your left side with your left elbow holding you up. And you pick up food with your right hand from big serving plates that everyone can reach.

Lucias... did you wash your hands?

LUCIUS:

In a minute, mom. But first I want to tell them why we don't use forks or knives. We have a servant who cuts up our food and serves it to us, and then we just use our fingers to eat. A little messy, but fun!

PORTIA:

Dinner is the most important meal of our day and we have three courses. An appetizer like eggs or oysters, then the main dish of fish or meat and vegetables, and then desert, maybe fruit with honey drizzled on top.

LUCIUS:

Or baked custard! That's my favorite desert. Let's eat!

11. JEWELRY

NARRATOR:

People in Pompeii loved to wear jewelry. The jewelry makers designed beautiful earrings, necklaces, bracelets, and especially rings. Both women and men wore rings, sometimes one on every finger! The jewelry was mostly made of gold and sometimes they added pieces of colored glass or precious stones, like emeralds...they're green... and a red stone called carnelian. All the jewelry in this exhibit is 2,000 years old, but it's so beautiful I think people would buy it today!

SFX: quite ambient sound

PORTIA: Do you see the ring that looks like two snakes facing each other?

I have one like that. I love it. And to us, snakes mean good luck.

Women in Pompeii love to look good, so besides jewelry we use makeup, perfume, and we love to get our hair styled. In nearby cases, look at the hairstyles on the sculptures of the two women. And you'll also see a comb, a hairpin, and some small containers for makeup and perfumes.

12. TRANSITION / GALLERY OVERVIEW

SFX: Low Rumble under

NARRATOR:

As you enter the next are of the exhibit , imagine what happened to Pompeii on August 24th, in the year 79. Disaster!

SFX: Large distant explosion

The volcano Mount Vesuvius began erupting and over two days buried the entire city under ashes and stones. Most people in the city ran away and escaped. But some people stayed inside their homes, thinking they'd be safe till the volcano stopped. Unfortunately, they were trapped and they died when the volcano sent down a wave of hot poisonous gases, and wet ashes. Scientists call that mixture a pyroclastic flow.

We know what it was like in Pompeii that day because of a 17 year old boy named Pliny . He was in a town across the Bay of Naples with his mom and his uncle, and he saw the volcano erupt. His uncle left to go help people in Pompeii. Pliny stayed with his mom and had a clear view of what happened. Sad to say, his uncle was trapped by the volcano and never returned. Pliny later wrote two letters to friends describing what he saw.

Here's what he wrote in one letter.

SFX: low rumbling? Wind?

PLINY: (ACTOR)

Great flames and vast fires shone from many points on Mount Vesuvius. Then a fearful black cloud covered the sky and darkness fell, as if a lamp had been put out in a dark room. When the cloud finally lifted, the landscape was covered by a thick blanket of ash, as if it had snowed.

NARRATOR:

Pliny escaped, and so did Lucius and Portia. But thousands of people and animals in Pompeii did not.

13. LA MORTA (Dog)

SFX: Appropriate music

NARRATOR:

The figures on display, including this of a poor dog, are called body casts, and they're all that's left of the people, pets, and farm animals buried by the volcano. Body casts are not real bodies. But they show us the shapes of real people and animals in the exact positions they were in when they died trying to get away from the volcano. They're made out of plaster of paris, the same material a doctor uses to make a cast when you break your arm.

Now, maybe you're thinking..."wouldn't the hot lava of the volcano burn their bodies so there's nothing left?" Well, all volcanoes do not erupt the same way. Instead of sending lava into Pompeii, Mount Vesuvius sent flows of hot poisonous gases and dust and moist ashes

Here's how scientists made these body casts. The moist ash that covered up the people hardened over time and created a hard shell. The bodies inside the hard ash decayed and left a hollow space or cavity. So the scientists poured wet plaster inside the hollow spaces and when the plaster hardens you have body casts. Look closely and you can see a lot of details on the people and on the animals. For instance, this dog still has his collar on. And the pig reminds us that probably a lot of farm animals died from the volcano too.

14. REDISCOVERY

SFX: dramatic musical flourish...

NARRATOR:

The re-discovery of Pompeii is an amazing story. After the volcano, most people eventually forgot that there was a Pompeii, and it disappeared from history.

It stayed covered up for 1,700 years, just waiting to be discovered again. And then about 250 years ago, people began digging and uncovering Pompeii.

SFX: hammer on stone/digging

And the digging is still going on! Most of the objects you saw today were uncovered at Pompeii, and scientists are finding new things every day.

It's sad that the city was buried. But all that volcanic material kept Pompeii preserved, so that today we can learn so much about how people lived during the time of the Roman Empire. About people like Lucius and his mom Portia.

LUCIUS:

That's right. Because of what scientists uncover, you don't have to just guess how we lived – you can really know!

PORTIA:

Our city is one of the most famous yet tragic cities of the ancient world. But in a way it's still alive today because millions of people visit the ruins of Pompeii every year.

LUCIUS:

Maybe some day you'll go there too!

I hope you enjoyed A Day in Pompeii. Valedico!

That means goodbye.

NARRATOR:

Goodbye from me too.

And don't forget to return your Acoustiguide before you leave.

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