



The Roman baths

Ebora Liberalitas Iulia

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Contents: T. Sarantopoulos
Graphic design: Francisco Bilou

Praefurnium

It is a space partially excavated with structures related to subsidiary compartments - furnaces to heat water and heated spaces (*caldarium*, *tepidarium*, *sudatorium* and *laconicum*).



0 5m

Laconicum

Laconicum, was a space heated through the hypocaust system, i.e. the ground was supported on 48 brick columns, with spaces between them, allowing the hot air to circulate freely. This circular and vaulted room, which plan follows the Vitruvian canons, is 9 meters in diameter and was intended for hot and steam baths. The diameter of the laconicum tank is 5 meters, and is built into the ground at the middle of the room, organized in three steps coated with marble.



Natatio

In 1994 the outdoors pool at the thermal complex (14,40 x 43,20m) was laid bare but for the sake of conservation is currently buried under the new body of the municipal building (access by Dona Isabel Street) therefore not available for visit.



Ebora Liberalitas Iulia – thematic trail

The cities of Lusitania and especially these that came to have the legal and political status of municipium, saw a great development in public works oriented towards religious life, collective use and practical utility. The municipalisation of Évora may have occurred in the last quarter of the 1 century BC, some scholars posit a date earlier than the year 27 BC, during the stay of Augustus in the Iberian Peninsula. Regardless of the exact date, the construction of public buildings was the most immediate way to claim the political power of the new conquerors and also the most effective means of acculturation of indigenous peoples. In *Ebora Liberalitas Julia* these works were: a great forum, with its temple; thermal baths (partially laid bare); a theater (yet to be discovered) and several works in the area of the road system (decumanus maximus and cardo) and the aqueduct.

Despite the closeness between the monuments and spaces of Roman architecture (see location plan on the side), these have not been yet subject of a joint approach in terms of their fruition.

The musealization of the thermal baths, and its integration into a thematic guide, is as an interactive essay aiming its discovery and a greater knowledge of the Roman Ebora.

GLOSSARY

Thermae - name used by the Romans to designate sites for public bathing; **Praefurnium** - furnace; **caldarium** - hot baths compartment; **Sudatorium** - sort of sauna; **Laconicum** - hot water and steam room.

1. Roman Baths
2. Roman Temple
3. Museum of Évora
4. Domus in Alcárcova de Cima (street)
5. Roman Gate
6. Roman Villa of Tourega



Seneca (1 century AD)

«I live near a public bathing house. When the stronger individuals are exercising ... I hear their roars ... add the arrest of a thief, and the one who always likes to hear his own voice in the bath, and those jumping into the pool with a huge bang...»

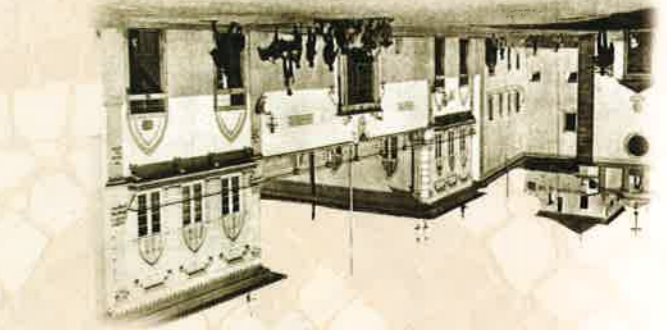
A public bath was not just a place for hygiene. The thermal baths were also frequented for sporting activities, cultural purposes and health treatments.

Roman baths were very busy places. Citizens, spent whole days there, telling news and gossiping, distracted with board games, fighting and exercising. Even the poor could attend there because the entries were affordable and for children were free. It was possible to go through a sequence of 3 or 4 different types of baths, from tepid to hot and dry, then to the warm and steam baths and at the end, a final cold and invigorating bath in the pool (natatio). The rich brought their slaves to help them, or had assistants to do so, for a fee.

A day in the baths...

the Roman baths

Ebora Liberalitas Iulia
Interpretive guide



Palace of Condes of Sortelha - Town hall - Roman Baths

Until 1882 remained in Praça de Sertório, the old Manor house of Martins da Silveira, counts of Sortelha that after remodelling and adaptation into Town Hall, lost the former appearance in what was the cloistered courtyard (current atrium) a medieval tower and some sixteenth century vaults.



Since the early twentieth century, is the seat of administration of the city of Évora, with an imposing metal staircase and coverage, "iron architecture" designed by architect Alfredo Costa Campos, the Noble Room and the Hall known as Salão dos 16 Leões (Hall of the 16 Lions) on the first floor.

In a recent refurbishment on the ground floor (1987), luckily and thanks to the constant attention to buried heritage, some structures of the Roman period, have been discovered, such as the laconicum and a decade later the praefurnium and natatio.

The area uncovered and exposed to be musealized, is of 250 m².

