

## Roman Villas

Upper class, wealthy Roman Citizens in the countryside around Rome and throughout the Empire lived in villa-complexes, the accommodation for rural farms. The villa-complex consisted of three parts.

The "Villa Urbana" was where the owner and his family lived. This would be similar to the wealthy-person's Domus in the city and would have painted walls and lovely artistic mosaics on the floors.

The "Villa Rustica" was where the staff and slaves of the villa worked and lived. This was also the living quarters for the farm animals. There would usually be other rooms here that might be used as store rooms, a hospital or even a prison.

The third part of the villa-complex would be the storage rooms. These would be where the products of the farm were stored ready for transport to buyers. Storage rooms here would have been used for Oil, Wine, Grain, Grapes and any other produce of the villa. Other rooms in the villa might include an office, a temple for worship, several bedrooms, a dining room and a kitchen.

Villas were often plumbed with running water and many would have had under-floor central heating known as a "hypocaust". There are more than two dozen Roman villas in Britain, one of the finest being at Fishbourne in West Sussex.

1. Who lived in the villa rustica?
2. Who lived in the villa urbana?
3. What type of occupation was associated with a villa?
4. What might be stored in the third part of the villa?
5. Name three things that may have been grown at a villa complex.
6. How were the walls of the villa decorated?
7. How many villas are there in Britain ?
8. Why do you think that the villas are in the south of the country?
9. Apart from the owners, staff and slaves, name two other types of people who might be found sleeping in a villa.
10. Name one place where you can go to see a Roman Villa.

Part of the mosaic floor  
at Fishbourne Palace

