



The Baths of Caracalla in 3D: “A Journey Back in Time”

Nicole Campisano (December 28, 2017)



Now until the end of 2019, tourists visiting the roman Baths of Caracalla ruins will be able to witness the site in its original glory with the help of virtual reality goggles.

Calling it a “journey back in time,” Francesco Prosperetti, the director of Rome’s cultural heritage department, can hardly contain his excitement over the new 3D tours of Rome’s Baths of Caracalla. As of December 20th, tourists can now choose to wear [virtual reality goggles](#) [2] while touring the ancient ruins for an inside look of what the bath house looked like in the early third century AD.

With accompanying audio commentary, visitors will be able wander around the ruins with a new perspective. The virtual reality goggles give tourists the opportunity to see the magnificent columns, mosaic adorned walls, running water, as well as the famous [Farnese Bull](#) [3] and [Farnese Hercules](#) [4] statues that once stood during the peak of the [Roman Empire](#) [5].

More than a Bath House

All that is left today is the outer complex of the bath house. However, with the help of modern technology, visitors can experience what the Romans did. Along with two baths, one hot and one



cold, there was also a gymnasium, a Greek library, a Latin library, a space for sports competitions, as well as a facility for recreational activities.

There were also tunnels beneath the structure. Underground, slaves worked tirelessly to power the water that went up to the pools, and to manage the heating system via wheels.

Scholarship and Technology

In the sixth century, the Baths of Caracalla were deserted after the [Visigoths](#) [6] looted it and destroyed Rome’s aqueducts. Whatever remained was taken by popes to construct basilicas in Rome out of the marble columns.

The site was exhumed in the 1500s, and any of the ornamentation that was still left was sent throughout Italy as additions to existing collections.

Although little was left of the Caracalla bath chambers, with 30 years of intense studying and research, the originality of the complex was able to be recreated. The aesthetic that the virtual reality goggles provide is incredibly accurate and remains true to history.

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[1] <http://www.iitaly.org/files/bathsofcaracallafacingcaldariumjpg>

[2] <https://www.vrs.org.uk/virtual-reality-gear/glasses/how-do-they-work.html>

[3] <https://archaeology-travel.com/artefacts/farnese-bull-naples/>

[4] <https://www.classics.cam.ac.uk/museum/collections/museum-highlights/farnese-hercules>

[5] https://www.ancient.eu/Roman_Empire/

[6] <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Visigoth>