

Vomitorium

A vomitorium in a Roman amphitheater.

A **vomitorium** is a hallway or [alcove](#) found in [ancient Roman buildings](#). It is called a vomitorium because it can allow many, many people to enter or leave the building at the same time. The word in Latin means "place from which things spew forth," or "place that things come out of quickly."

Real vomitoria

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Romans built vomitoria in theaters and stadiums. One building could have many vomitoria on each floor.^[1] Some modern theaters and stadiums also have vomitoria. In the 1980s, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival added vomitoria to its Allen Elizabethan Theatre so they could do more things with entrances and exits.^[2]

Myths about vomitoria

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Because the name sounds like "vomit" in English, people in the 1800s and 1900s thought a vomitorium was a special room that ancient Romans would go to during feasts. They would throw up in that room to empty their stomachs so they could return to the feast and eat more. But this is not true. Ancient Romans did not build special rooms to vomit in.^[3]

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- [Ancient Rome](#)

References

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1. [↑] Jules Gailhabaud, ed. (1844). *[Ancient and Modern Architecture: Consisting of Views, Plans, Elevations, Sections, and Details of the Most Remarkable Edifices in the World](#)*. Vol. 1. F. Didot and Company. Retrieved July 1, 2020.
2. [↑] ["Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Allen Elizabethan Theatre"](#). Auerbach Consultants. Archived from [the original](#) on July 2, 2020. Retrieved July 1, 2020.

3. ¹ Stephanie Pappas (August 28, 2016). "[Purging the Myth of the Vomitorium](#)". Scientific American. Retrieved July 1, 2020.

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