

-800	-700	-600	-500	-400	-300	-200	-100	1-100	100	200	300	400	500	600
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-753 -509 **B.C.** -27 **A.D.** 284 475

Early history:
Legends of Kings of Rome: Etruscans expelled in 509
According to Livy, Rome was founded in 753 by Romulus, who was descended from Aeneas the Trojan prince. By the 8th Century BC shepherds and farmers lived on four of Rome's seven hills. Traces of wattle and daub huts have been found on the Palatine hill. Rome's main sewer, the Cloaca Maxima, was probably built in 600BC and is still functioning. The Servian walls were built around the 7 hills in 565 by Servius Tullius.



"Etruscan" Bronze statue of the she-wolf with Romulus & Remus was probably made in about 400BC with the twins added in 1500AD.

Roman Republic:
2 consuls lead the Senate until the system collapses when individuals such as Caesar become too powerful. In 509 Lucius Junius Brutus founded the republic. Rome expanded to include first Italy and then more countries. The Romans were influenced culturally by the Greeks and although they conquered Greece itself they felt in awe of Greek civilisation. When Scipio Africanus defeated Hannibal, Rome became master of the Mediterranean. However, the system of government gradually became unsustainable as military commanders became extremely powerful. Aqueducts brought water into the cities and the Ponte Fabricio, a bridge to Tiber Island, was built in 62BC and is still used by pedestrians.



Two beautiful Republican temples can be seen in the Forum Boarium, but most buildings from this period lie underground.

The orator and politician Cicero tried to preserve the Republic, but after a civil war between the factions of Caesar and Pompey, Caesar's great-nephew Augustus took power.



Roman Emperors:
Augustus founded the Julio-Claudian dynasty: the box-set drama "I Claudius" is a good introduction to this era. Augustus' *Ara Pacis* (altar of Peace) conveys a similar message to that of the poet Virgil's *Aeneid*. Vespasian's amphitheatre, the Colosseum, and the Pantheon completed by Hadrian both show how the invention of concrete enabled the Romans to create spectacular effects using arches and domes.



The crypt of San Clemente has a temple to a Persian sun-god. Trajan carved military scenes spiralling up a huge column next to his shopping mall and the Baths of Diocletian show how the Romans used their leisure time. Hadrian's villa at Tivoli is more like a small town, and successive emperors improved Rome's port at Ostia.

Despite periodic persecutions, Christianity flourished and the Papacy was established after St Peter was the first Pope.

East & West
Empire split
Early Christian Rome
Diocletian divided the empire into two, establishing the Eastern Empire in Byzantium, modern Istanbul. Constantine established Christianity as the official religion in 313, mainly because he thought the Christian God had helped him to win an important battle. Many churches were built over early Christian meeting places and sites of martyrdoms and Rome has miles of underground catacombs where Christians were buried and which contain frescoes, eg this one showing the Good Shepherd.



It is interesting to notice the differences in Roman mosaics and Byzantine-influenced mosaics in the apses of Christian churches. This, from Santa Costanza, shows Christ as the Good Shepherd with St Peter & St Paul. Rome was sacked by the Goths and Vandals in 410, 455 and 546.

The Roman Emperor Romulus Augustulus was deposed in 476, regarded as the end of the Western Roman Empire and the beginning of the Middle Ages in Europe.