

Information sheet about The Colosseum



1) The Colosseum was built between **72 A.D** and **80 A.D** under the **Emperor Vespasian**, in the heart of Ancient Rome.

2) Made from **stone** and **concrete**, this magnificent monument was built with the man power of tens of thousands of slaves.

3) The Colosseum is the largest **amphitheater** (meaning 'theatre in the round') in the world! Oval in shape, it measures 189m long, 156m wide and 50m high (about the height of a 12 storey building). This ancient sporting arena could easily fit a modern day football pitch inside!

4) This brilliant building had **80 entrances** and could seat approximately **50,000 spectators** who would come to watch sporting events and games. These events included gladiatorial combats, wild animal hunts and, believe it or not, ship naval battles!

5) Free for all! At the Colosseum's major events - often those organised and paid for by the emperors themselves - there was no entry fee. And **free food** was sometimes served, too.

Bonus! Emperors would use this as a way to gain popularity and support from the public.

6) The events at the Colosseum were seriously brutal, though - during certain games held by the emperors around 10,000 animals were killed in a single day.

7) The first games ever to be held were in 80 A.D, under **Emperor Titus** (the son of Vespasian), and they ran for 100 days straight. Games continued to be held for centuries to come - gladiatorial games until the fifth century and animal hunts until the 6th century.

8) To protect the spectators from the blistering sun and heat of Ancient Rome, there was the **velarium** - an awning that could be pulled over the top of the seating area to provide shade. Clever, eh?

9) Below the Colosseum were numerous rooms and **underground passages**. Here is where the animals and gladiators were kept, waiting to meet their fate in the arena above. There were also **36 trap doors** in the arena for special effects!

10) Although two-thirds of the colosseum has been destroyed over time - mostly the result of vandalism, earthquakes and fires - it is today a popular tourist site, attracting thousands of people every year!