



"Hi! I'm Max!

I'm NG Kids' intrepid time-travelling mouse! Every month in the new NG Kids Mini Histories magazine, I'll take you on a trip through history to uncover the most amazing civilisations the world has ever seen – from the ancient Egyptians to the Aztecs! So, are you ready for an adventure? Great – let's go to early Rome, Italy's 'Eternal City', and meet the ancient Romans!"

Birth of an empire

Imagine a small town turning into the centre of a great empire! Well, that's what happened to Rome. Founded in 753BC by its first king, Romulus, Rome grew into a rich and powerful city over the next few hundred years. Its rulers soon reigned over the whole of Italy and by AD 117 the Roman Empire included all the lands around the Mediterranean and much of Europe, including England, Wales and parts of Scotland. On this map (right) you can see just how large the empire grew. It lasted almost 500 years, but fell apart in AD 476 when people from beyond the frontiers invaded and conquered Rome itself.



Did you know...?
The biggest town in Roman Britain was Londinium (London)!

TERRIBLE TWIN!

Roman legend says that Romulus had a twin brother called Remus. As babies they were abandoned in the area which later became Rome. A she-wolf found and raised them, but when they grew up, Romulus fought and killed Remus and became the first ruler of Rome!



Rags and riches

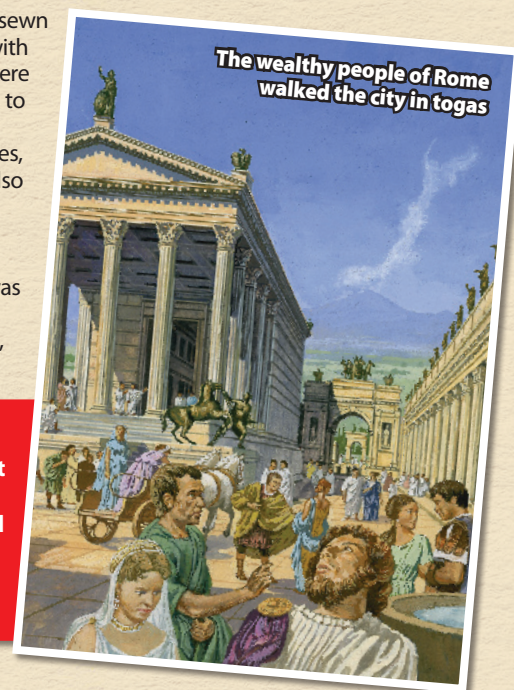


Tunics – two pieces of woollen fabric sewn together at the sides and shoulders with openings for your arms and head – were all the rage in Rome, and were a status symbol to show how wealthy and important they were.

Men's tunics would reach down to their knees, while women's were longer. The togas could also be worn over their tunics. Children generally dressed in simple tunics, tied around the waist with a belt. They also wore bullas – a round locket on a chain, containing an amulet that was believed to protect them from harm. The poor slaves, however, were forbidden to wear togas, having to make do with very basic tunics!

WHAT WAS A TOGA?

The toga was a woollen shawl that measured about three metres long, two metres wide, and would be elaborately draped around the body, which looked very elegant, but made it hard to move!



Roman feast

The Romans liked to enjoy their food, often lying down on a couch while eating with their hands. They occasionally used a spoon to eat soups, but they would never use a knife and fork. Rich Romans liked to eat exotic food, such as stork, roast parrot and even flamingo. Slaves cooked and served the food, and also washed the feet of guests before the meal! The common Roman, however, lived on a diet of porridge, bread, vegetables and fruit, as meat was too expensive for them.

Did you know...?
Wealthy Romans had slaves that they could buy or sell!



SOMETHING FISHY!

The Romans loved adding *garum* – a fishy sauce that they left to rot in stone tanks with salt and herbs – to every meal, even dessert. Yum!