

ROMAN BAETICA ROUTE

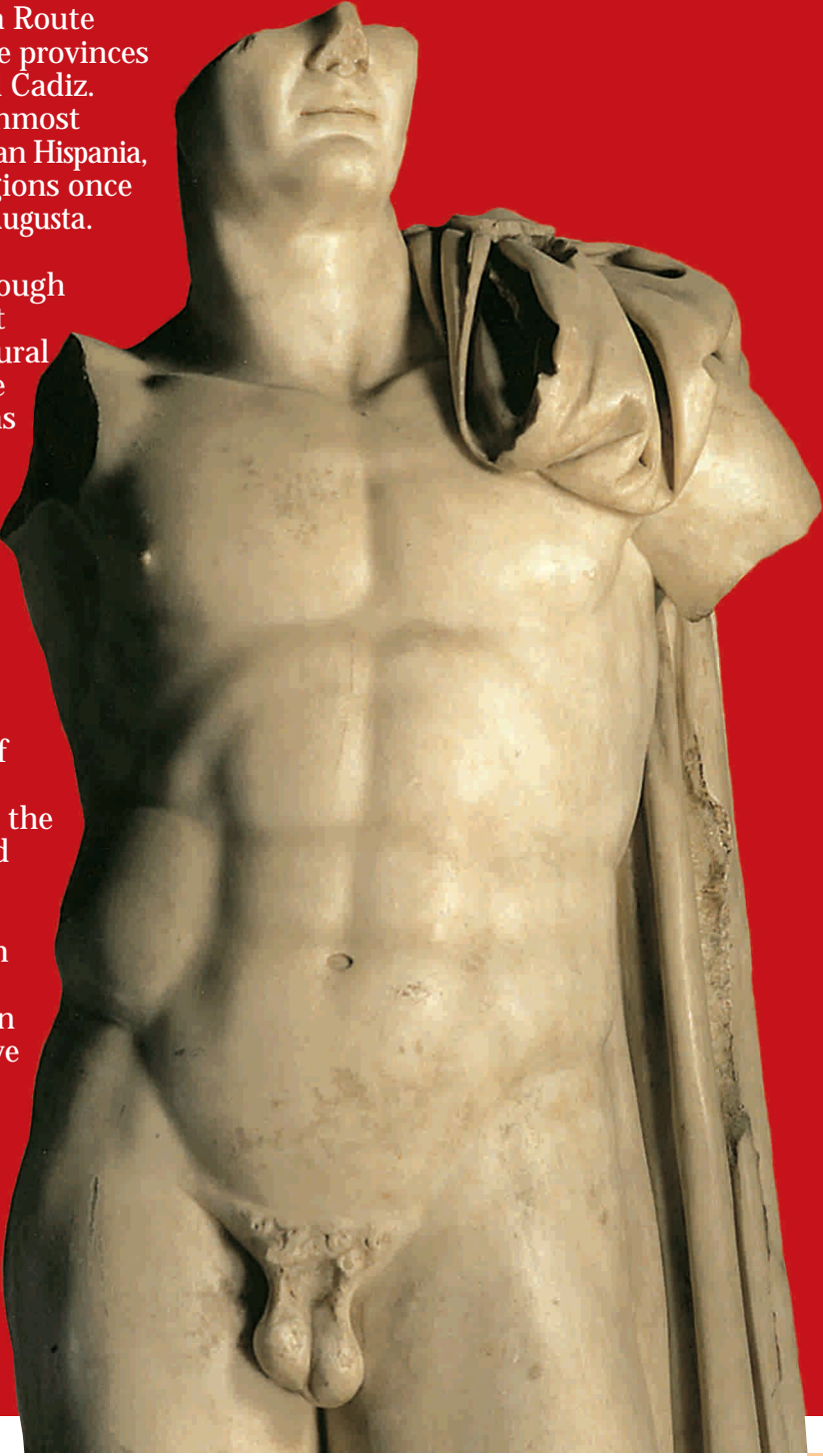


Today the Roman Baetica Route covers twelve cities in the provinces of Seville, Cordova and Cadiz. Crossing the southernmost province of the Roman Hispania, it encompasses regions once served by the Via Augusta.

The Route runs through countryside of great geographic and natural interest, such as the Subbética Mountains Natural Park in Cordova, La Campiña, Bahía de Cadiz Natural Park, Sierra de Hornachuelos Natural Park and the Guadalquivir Valley.

The tourist offering in these towns features scores of elements worthy of admiration, including Seville Gate at Carmona, the city of Italica at Santiponce, the El Ruedo estate in Almedinilla, the walls around Marchena and the architectural compounds at Osuna, Écija and Cordova.

From the third century BCE through the fifth century CE Baetica was one of the territories annexed to the Roman Empire. Under Roman rule, this region was valued for its mining, olive oil and cereal production and its highly Romanized population. So Romanized was it in fact that two of its citizens rose to imperial power: Emperors Trajan and Hadrian, both born in Italica.



Via Augusta was one of the foremost roads in the Roman communications network. The Guadalquivir River, in turn, is Andalusia's geographic backbone. In ancient times, communications in Baetica province were structured around the Baetis River and Via Augusta. The system of public works stretching from Cadiz to Cástulo constituted a complex communications network of huge economic, military and propagandistic value.

WINE, OLIVE OIL, GARUM

In Roman times wine was stored in amphoras specifically crafted for this purpose by Baetica potters. Today, sherry wine from the province of Cadiz, particularly manzanilla sherry from the Sanlúcar area, is renowned for its quality. Cordova in turn is home to oloroso, amontillado and sweet sherry: the wines from the Montilla-Moriles region in particular command high prestige.

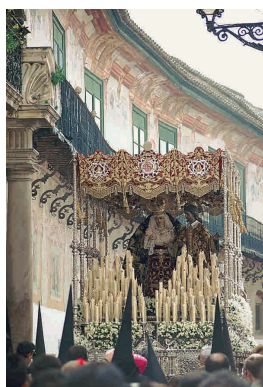
Olive oil production is a millenary tradition in Andalusia. Today, excellent olive oil can be found in both the Sevillian region of Campiña and in the Subbética area of the province of Cordova, where some of the most highly prized oil bears the Priego appellation of origin (which includes Almedinilla oil). The production of several of these areas enjoy international renown.

At Cadiz Bay, the economy revolved around the sale of fish. Garum became an indispensable seasoning in Roman cuisine. Today the city's canneries, particularly its tuna canning industry, have good reason to boast of the high quality of their product.



TRADITIONS

As early as the first century, the geographer Strabo described the charm and grace of the dancing ladies of Cadiz. Today the province is known for its bulerías (gleeful singing, clapping and dancing). Travellers can pleasure in the local festivities in the towns along the route in spring, summer and autumn. Religious imagery of the highest quality, sculpted by masters such as Ocampo, Montes de Oca or Juan de Mesa, is on display during Holy Week at Cordova, Carmona, Écija, Osuna and Almedinilla; not to mention the singular traditions that imbue Holy Week at Puente Genil and Montoro with a unique personality. The Via



Crucis at Santiponce on the first Saturday in Lent is a particularly intimate and moving event. Any number of romerías or pilgrimages to chapels or shrines are held along the route, such as the Virgen de Gracia romería in Carmona in september. And just before Lent, Cadiz hosts one of Spain's most renowned carnavales (pre-Lent partying and pageants).



WHERE TO EAT

SANTIPONCE
Restaurante El Ventorrillo Canario
Avda. Extremadura, 13. Tel. 955 996 700

CARMONA
Mesón Restaurante La Almazara
C/. Santa Ana, 33. Tel. 954 190 076

LA LUISIANA
Restaurante El Volante
Avda. de Andalucía, 129. Tel. 955 904 592

ECIJA
Restaurante Casa Pirula
Avda. Miguel de Cervantes, 48. Tel. 954 830 300

ALMODÓVAR DEL RÍO
Restaurante La Taberna
C/. Antonio Machado, 20. Tel. 957 713 684

CORDOVA
Restaurante Porta di Roma (Jewish quarter)
C/. Calleja de la Luna, 1. Tel. 957 298 551

MONTORO
Casa-Bar Yépez
Pza. del Charco. Tel. 957 160 123

ALMEDINILLA
Gastronomy seminars: *The delights of Roman dining*
Reservations: Tel. 957 703 317

PUENTE GENIL
Contactar con Oficina de Turismo
Paseo Antonio Fernández Díaz, s/n. Tel. 957 609 161

OSUNA
El Mesón del Duque
Pza. de la Duquesa, 2. Tel. 954 812 845

MARCHENA
Restaurante Casa Manolo
C/. San Sebastián, 22. Tel. 954 843 011

CADIZ
Restaurante El Faro
C/. San Félix, 16. Tel. 956 211 068

TARIFA
Restaurante El Pozuelo
Ctra. N-340, km. 82. Tel. 956 685 194

WHERE TO SLEEP

SANTIPONCE
Hotel Anfiteatro Romano ***
Avda. Extremadura, 13. Tel. 955 996 704

CARMONA
Parador de Turismo Alcázar del Rey Don Pedro ****
Los Alcázares, s/n. Tel. 954 141 010

LA LUISIANA
Hostal El Volante **
Avda. de Andalucía, 129. Tel. 955 904 592

ECIJA
Hotel Palacio Los Granados
C/. Emilio Castelar, 42. Tel. 955 901 050

ALMODÓVAR DEL RÍO
Hostal San Luis **
Ctra. Palma del Río. Tel. 957 635 421

CORDOVA
Hotel Alfaro (adjacent to the Roman temple)
C/. Alfaro, 18. Tel. 957 491 920

MONTORO
Hotel Mirador de Montoro***
C/. Cerro de la Muela, s/n. Tel. 957 165 105

ALMEDINILLA
Rural accommodations in Almedinilla. Tel. 957 703 317

PUENTE GENIL
Hotel El Carmen
Avda. de la Estación, s/n. Tel. 957 601 193

OSUNA
Hotel Palacio Marqués de la Gomera ****
C/. San Pedro, 20. Tel. 954 812 223

MARCHENA
Hospedería Santa María
Palacio Ducal, s/n. Tel. 954 843 983

CADIZ
Hotel Atlántico ("Parador") ****
Avda. Duque de Nájera, 9. Tel. 956 226 905

TARIFA
Hotel Dos Mares ***
Ctra. N-340, km. 79'500. Tel. 956 684 035

FOR INFORMATION ALONG THE WAY

OFICINA DE LA RUTA BÉTICA ROMANA
Alcázar de la Puerta de Sevilla, s/n
41410 - Carmona (Sevilla / España) Tíno. 954 190 955
e-mail: beticaronana@carmona.org
www.beticaronana.org

SANTIPONCE
Oficina Municipal de Turismo
C/. Feria, s/n.
41970 - Santiponce (Sevilla)
Tel. 955 998 028
www.turismosantiponce.es

CARMONA
Centro Municipal de Recepción Turística
Alcázar de la Puerta de Sevilla, s/n.
41410 - Carmona (Sevilla)
Tel. 954 190 955
www.turismo.carmona.org

LA LUISIANA
Centro de Atención al Visitante
Avda. de Andalucía, 15
41430 - La Luisiana (Sevilla)
Tel. 955 907 202
www.sevillaweb.info/ciudades/laluisiana

ECIJA
Oficina Municipal de Turismo
Cámara Oscura
Plaza de España, 1
41400 - Écija (Sevilla)
Tel. 955 902 933
www.turismoecija.com

ALMODÓVAR DEL RÍO
Oficina Municipal de Turismo
C/. ABC, 7
14720 - Almodovar del Río (Córdoba)
Tel. 957 635 014
www.almodovardelrio.com

CORDOVA
Consortio de Turismo de Córdoba
C/. Rey de Heredia, 22
14003 - Córdoba
Tel. 957 201 774
www.turismodecordoba.org

MONTORO
Oficina Municipal de Turismo
C/. Corredora, 25
14600 - Montoro (Córdoba)
Tel. 957 160 089
www.montoro.es

ALMEDINILLA
Centro de Recepción de Visitantes
Ctra. A-339, km. 37
14812 - Almedinilla (Córdoba)
Tel. 957 703 317 Móvil: 606 972 070
www.almedinillaturismo.es

PUENTE GENIL
Oficina de la Información Turística
C/. Susana Benítez, 46
14500 - Puente Genil (Córdoba)
Tel. 957 600 853 Móvil: 635 643 723
www.turismopuentegenil.es

OSUNA
Oficina Municipal de Turismo
C/. Carrera, 82 (Antiguo Hospital)
41640 - Osuna (Sevilla)
Tel. 954 815 732
www.euosuna.org/turismo

MARCHENA
Oficina Municipal de Turismo
C/. Las Torres, 40
41620 - Marchena (Sevilla)
Tel. 955 846 167
www.turismomarchena.org

CADIZ
Centro de Recepción de Turistas
Delegación Municipal de Turismo
Paseo de Canalejas, s/n.
11006 - Cadiz
Tel. 956 241 001
www.cadizturismo.com

TARIFA
Oficina de Turismo de Tarifa
C/. Paseo de la Alameda, s/n.
11380 - Tarifa (Cadiz)
Tel. 956 680 993
www.aytoatarifa.com





Roman letter

Whatever the season and however they time their visit, travellers taking the Roman *Baetica* Route are bound to carry away a very personal impression of the places they discover. The route we propose was once travelled by one of ancient *Baetica*'s inhabitants. But it will be up to the visitor to decide whether the olive oil from Almedinilla or the fish preserves from Cadiz are like the ones our guide Theophorus delighted in during the late second century CE, or whether these products and places have changed and gained with time and history. The one thing we're sure of is that anyone travelling along *Via Augusta* will, like Theophorus, hold all these places in fond remembrance.

At the age of 81 Theophorus, an emancipated slave born in faraway Greece, philosopher of education and schoolmaster, was still teaching geography to thirty-some pupils at *Gades*, in the Roman province of *Baetica*.

After describing the birth of the *Baetis* River and the layout of *Via Augusta*, he would reminisce with his students about certain places in the southernmost province of *Hispania*: the economy, the banquets, the hard work done by the farmhands.

Well acquainted with *Baetica* for having lived in different places within this vast region for many years, and for having studied Strabo, he delighted in summoning the most vivid of his memories for his pupils.



Teacher and pupil

VI. CORDVBA. CORDOVA

Government

In *Cordvba*, capital of *Baetica*, my master gave me permission to visit my good friend Marcelo, a man skilled in the art of intrigue after having spent much of his life in government. In one of his latest letters he told me that he had decided to draft an extensive treatise on animals and their behaviour, plants and their virtues, the nature of elements, their secrets, their powers... the universe in a word; so prodigious that it needs no gods. With a modest income and the rest of his life ahead of him, he felt he had the time and the money to finish his tract. Warmed by wine, we talked all night long. At dawn, he ceremoniously set a chest in front of me where he kept a long, densely written roll. And there, indeed, were the *tigris* and the *draco*, the *cyenrus* and the *manticora*... But their habits were very much like the manners of minor



Clavdivs Marcelo Temple



provincial officials. The plants distilled the bitter sap of unfair ordinances and the fabulous mines stank of the mould of rotting parchment. I suddenly felt pity for my friend and the melancholy intuition that I would never see him again.

VII. EPORA. MONTORO

The sculpture

What I remember of *Epora* is a sculpture that caught my eye not so much for its unquestionably fine workmanship, but for the certainty that I had met the person it represented in my master's home many years before.



The Baetis River at Montoro

I was convinced that the similitude was both perfect and timeless, for it captured the absolute essence of a man in avid pursuit of success and honour: a glowing shell of glory that housed a heart arrogant and vain to the point of foolishness; envious of his superiors, mean to his inferiors, distrustful of his peers.

The stone hand, raised as if to pronounce a noble harangue about invincible armies, reminded me of his real hand of mortal flesh as it punished the youngest of my pupils behind a rosebush.



Toracatta

I. ITALICA. SANTIPONCE

The domvs

Soon after arriving from my Greek homeland, which I miss so very dearly and which, as you know, I constantly evoke, especially now that I'm on the verge of letting Charon row me to the other shore, I served in a *domvs* in Italica, the luxurious estate of the descendants of a Roman senator.



Planetarium

The house had baths and I taught my first classes in an elongated arena, at one end of which there was a large handsome exedra under a painted stucco vault. An impressive fountain presided over the arcade-flanked central courtyard.



Aviary



I truly believed that the gods had protected me, for the manor was built in Greek style and reminded me keenly of my ancestors' home.

Hadrian

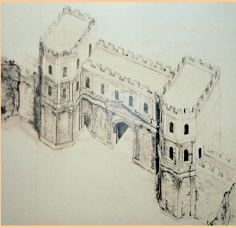
II. CARMO. CARMONA

The walls

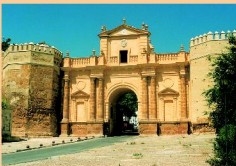


Seville port

grandeur of that walled city, with its series of parallel moats and impregnable fortress. We usually left the city



Cordova Gate in the first century



Cordova Gate today

Sometimes, walking along *Via Augustea*, on my way to a recreational villa my master kept in *Conventus Astigitano*, I would pass by the millenary Carmo. Taking a dirt road we would leave the amphitheatre behind on the north, opposite the necropolis, to enter the city through *Hispalis* Gate. Time and again as I gazed at its walls, Caesar's words would come to mind: "*Carmonenses, quae est longa firmissima totivs provinciae civitas*". Not even I would have been able to describe so pithily the military



Carmo coin

through the monumental *Cordvba* Gate. Ah, but a slave's life is sad indeed!... Standing beside my master as he sought the protection of the god of the *Hispalis* Gate temple, afraid I would give myself away from the expression on my face, this humble servant preferred to pray to the mysterious *Attis*, born in the east, whose image was kept in the Tomb of the Elephant.

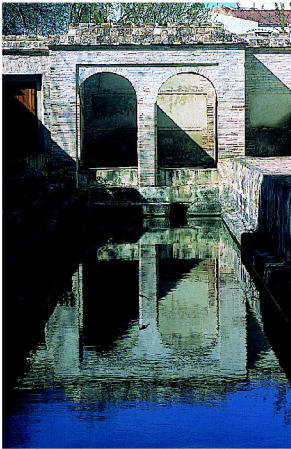
III. LA LUISIANA

The baths

Between *Carmo* and *Astigi*, along a road flanked by milestones, my master had an enormous recreational villa. He was wise to choose such a place, for there are no more beneficial and curative waters anywhere in the vicinity; in particular for diseases of the skin and other ailments associated with the pleasures of Venus

which you're too young to understand just yet. How can I describe the magnificence of these baths? Over the gurgling of the water, I often heard the echoes of the political rumours and worldly gossip maliciously whispered by high Astigitanian society.

One afternoon, after I had bathed my master and rubbed his body with oil and ointments, he sat down to his favourite pastime – dice – and lost nearly all he owned: money, property and slaves. And so it was that destiny placed me in the hands of a certain *Antonivs*, a wealthy merchant from *Astigi*.



Roman baths



Roman baths



Roman baths

IV. ASTIGI. ÉCIJA

The mosaics

Despite my age, an old man already in my forties, I was sent to *Antonivs*'s mosaic shop. There I felt that all the time I had spent studying rhetoric, geography and grammar had been a waste! But I must say that my knowledge of arithmetic and algebra proved to be very useful, for the *Astigi* mosaics were laid out mathematically.



Mosaic to Bacchus. Wine production.

What I remember most gratefully about the time I spent in that colony is my participation in the design of the magnificent mosaic to Bacchus and his retinue. It reminded me so vividly of my distant Greek Dionysius, protector of plant life, vitality and poetry! His wine initiates us in the earth's hidden mysteries.

But my master, who preferred nimble fingers and keen eyesight to cut the tesserae with precision, sold me to the a landowner who hailed from the villa at Almedinilla.



The wounded Amazon

V. CARVLA. ALMODÓVAR DEL RÍO

The river

Before reaching *Cordvba*, we stopped at *Carvbla*, a city erected on the banks of the *Baetis* River, where we saw amphoras brimming with fine *Baetica* olive oil from Cordovan orchards on barges



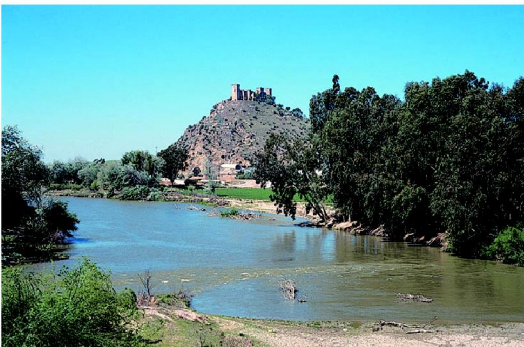
Carvbla coin

that plied their way down the river.

All the olive oil producing places in *Baetica* are well known in Rome. Once in Rome and emptied, the amphoras would be tossed away in a place where so many have accumulated that it's coming to be known as Mount *Testaccio*.



Portus



Baetis River

X. VRSO. OSUNA

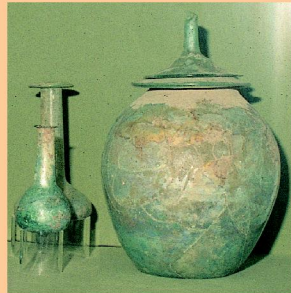
Laws

The kings of Tartessus kept immemorial laws received from the last of the inhabitants of Atlantis. I've been told that they were written on sacred silver columns, in a temple. I once heard that the Jews keep stone tablets in a sanctuary in Jerusalem where their own god engraved their law with lightning.



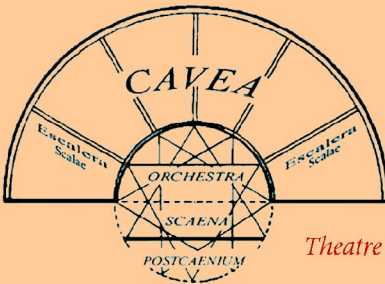
Lex vsaonensis

In Vrso, you can read the laws of the city on bronze panels... The laws seem as hard and weighty as the material they're written on, as if they intend to outlive the people they were written for. Although perhaps for the miserable prisoners condemned *ad metallum* that I saw just outside the city,



Urn and ointment jars

the law would have been no less harsh nor their punishment lighter to bear if it had been written on a fine layer of dust.

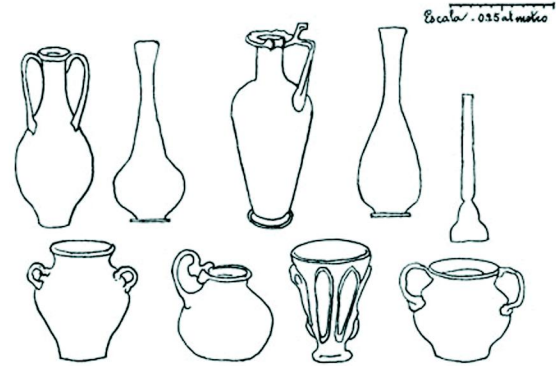


Theatre

XI. MARTIA. MARCHENA

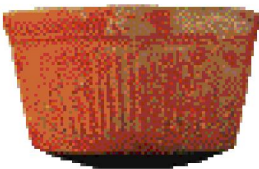
Everyday life

My master granted me my manumission and I became an emancipated slave. For reasons of affection, I lived in Octavio's house on a villa known as *Martia*. A wealthy landowner with an active social life, he entrusted me with receiving the guests invited to his frequent *caenae*. After seating them at the table, I would take their shoes and togas and offer them a relaxing, warm and perfumed bath.



Glass objects

Although I missed having time to study, I was content to set the table, put out the crystal tableware, the red goblets from Galia or even Italy; carry the vats for the diners and choose the oriental tapestries that would cover the tables and the *triclinium*. To this day I remember quite clearly how the guests would stumble away from the table in a drunken stupor when the dinner was over.



Terra sigillata
A. Nunez Yubá

Oil lamps
A. Nunez Yubá



Oil lamps

VIII. ALMEDINILLA. EL RUEDO

The villa

At the villa named El Ruedo, surrounded by olive trees alternating with golden ears of wheat, I was taken into the service of an affluent farmer who spent most of the year in *Cordvba*, the capital of *Baetica*.

There I learned how to work the fields and the olive orchards. My life has been divided equally between observing nature and studying. But I prefer to spend my time with Virgil rather than gazing at the stars in distant space.



Hypnos. God of sleep



Roman plough



El Ruedo Villa

IX. PUENTE GENIL

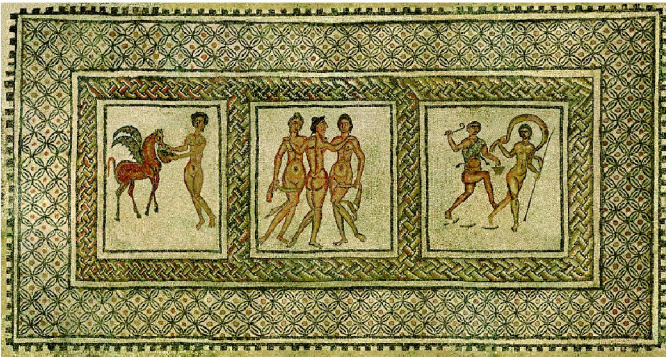
The portrait

I once spent a few days in a villa near the city of *Ostippo*, where my master had been invited to stay. It was located in an ideal spot surrounded by springs and wells. The luxurious residence, which was one hundred years old at the time, housed rich mosaics with multi-coloured tesserae. But it was the copies of imperial portraits that caught my attention, in particular one of *Livia Drusilla*, our first emperor's wife.



Bust of Livia Drusilla

Portrayed as a goddess with grave yet juvenile features, simply dressed and groomed, she was the very image of dignity, the model of the ideal matron, of the impeccable wife, guardian of the highest moral values... Looking at the portrait, I couldn't help but wonder whether everything they said about her was true.



Mosaic of the Three Graces

XII. GADES. CADIZ

The sea



La Caleta Beach and the Cathedral

This is the easternmost of the cities that I travelled to in *Baetica*. It's here that I've set up my *schola*. I'm teaching Homer again! Of the many things I've learnt about this city, the one that stands out most in my mind is that no one is a foreigner here. My language, Greek, can be heard in taverns and business dealings along with Latin and others that I'm unfamiliar with. I'll be forever grateful to *Melqart* or *Heracles* for allowing me to know that man has learned to tame the sea, fishing for tuna off the coast of *Gades* or in *Baelo* cove. Just as farming means the mastery of the land, fishing stands as proof of man's superiority over the unknown sea. The idea of converting repulsive marine gut into *garum* must have been whispered from Olympus into some mortal ear in Cadiz. Destiny brought me here, and could have hardly have chosen a better place for me to end my days. My most fervent desire is for my body to be consecrated to the *manes* gods (D.M.S.) and for the earth to be light upon me (H.S.E.S.T.T.L.), but the later the better.