



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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NEWS RELEASE
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Guests Can Spend *A Day in Pompeii* When New Exhibition Opens at Discovery Place

***More than 10,000 advance tickets currently sold for world-class exhibition.
Opens Friday, July 11.***

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – The ancient Roman city of Pompeii is brought up from the ashes as Discovery Place introduces its newest exhibition, *A Day in Pompeii*, opening **Friday, July 11**. The exhibition only has appeared in three U.S. cities with Charlotte being the fourth and final U.S. destination.

A Day in Pompeii paints a rich portrait of ancient Roman life in 79 A.D. and explores the fateful day in history when the city was buried by the catastrophic eruption of Mt. Vesuvius.

The exhibition features dazzling examples of ancient Rome’s artistry and craftsmanship. More than 13,000 square feet, *A Day in Pompeii* showcases the city’s sophisticated culture, national treasures, priceless artifacts and beautiful art with more than 250 exceptionally, well-preserved items that once were buried beneath 13 feet of volcanic ash and mud.

“*A Day in Pompeii* is the result of a collaboration between Discovery Place, three U.S. science museums and the Italian government,” said John Mackay, president and CEO of Discovery Place. “Our ability to work in international partnerships and develop extraordinary exhibitions like *Pompeii*, which features artifacts of ancient life that have rarely left Italy, is a testament to our continuing efforts to put Discovery Place in the forefront of museums worldwide.”

Visitors get a true sense of the sophistication, luxury and lifestyle of Pompeii before the volcano erupted as they are drawn back to August 24, 79 A.D. Upon entering the exhibition through a Roman-columned entryway, guests will discover a society that in some ways was not much different from their own.

Immersed in the vibrant, bustling city of Pompeii, families step into a tavern that highlights the society’s food and nutrition practices. They can view a baker’s clay oven, cooking stoves, pitchers, pots, skillets and even examples of common food items carbonized by the eruption.

Pompeii was a vital seaport, the center of a rich agricultural area and one of the Roman Empire’s most famous wine growing regions. Guests can learn about Pompeii’s important fishing industry, businesses and economy by viewing authentic artifacts such as fishing hooks, anchors, medical tools, hanging bronze scales and weights, coins and drills.

Visitors can reflect on the religious beliefs and practices of Pompeii as they enter an area featuring religious and life-after-death relics. This area features a shrine for household deities of Greek and Roman traditions, small household altars, small god and goddess statuaries, funerary containers, amulets, a headstone

Guests Can Spend A Day in Pompeii When New Exhibition Opens at Discovery Place Page 2

and large marble statues. Together, these items call to mind the public and private religious beliefs of Pompeii's citizens as well as their burial customs.

As they travel further, guests wander into a home and garden setting highlighted by a stunning, exquisitely-preserved, 15-foot-wide garden fresco. Families can examine common objects found in private residences and gardens that made up Pompeian everyday life – from beds to lanterns to a hair pin and comb.

The Roman lifestyle and the Pompeii citizens' love for art and culture also is on display with richly-colored, room-sized frescoes, garden statues, furniture, luxury personal items and jewelry along with everyday items like plates and bowls.

Finally, guests get a glimpse of a fateful moment in history as they are led into the final impact of August 24, 79 A.D. Darkness falls with images of the blackened sky of Mt. Vesuvius ejecting ash and rock nine miles upward into the Italian sky. Original, archeological field casts of eight of the volcano's victims - frozen in exceptional detail in their last moments - are exhibited poignantly, allowing guests to experience a powerful connection to the people of this lost city.

Under construction, **opening in early September**, the Museum also will feature an interactive area where families are given the opportunity to explore the science of volcanology and walk on a 12' x 21' floor map showcasing active and dormant volcanoes around the world. Younger visitors also will have a chance to expand all they've learned about ancient art and architecture with interactive exhibits where they can build a Roman arch; complete a Roman-era mosaic; try their hand at Roman writing; make a volcano; dig for artifacts; discover how seismographs record the earth's tremors and more.

***A Day in Pompeii* is on display at Discovery Place from July 11, 2008 – Jan. 4, 2009.**

Advance general admission tickets are on sale now. Reservations are highly recommended. Tickets to the exhibition will be for timed entries, so before making a purchase, visitors will be asked to select the date and time of their visit.

Guests can purchase general admission tickets in one of three ways:

1. **Online at discoveryplace.org.** After purchasing tickets online, guests print out a confirmation page. This page must be brought to the Will Call desk at Discovery Place prior to or on the day of the visit. Online convenience fees apply.
2. **Via phone at 1-877-849-4377.** Callers can purchase tickets to the exhibition with a credit card. Visitors who purchase tickets by phone will pick them up at the Will Call desk prior to or on the day of their visit.
3. **In person at Discovery Place.** Visitors can purchase tickets at the Admissions Desk in the Museum during regular Museum hours.

Admission to Discovery Place and *A Day in Pompeii* is \$20 for adults (14-59); \$17 for children (2-13); free for children younger than 2; and \$18 for college students with ID, seniors ages 60+ and military with ID. Discounts are available for Discovery Place Members and for groups of 15 or more. Children age 13 and younger must be accompanied by a responsible adult while in Discovery Place. Guests also can enhance their experience with audio guides, which are available for rental at \$2 per adult/senior/member and \$1 per child (2-13).

The last timed-entry tickets will be sold for a time 90 minutes prior to Museum closing. During the run of the exhibition, the Museum is open from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. (last *Pompeii* ticket sold at 3:30 p.m.), Monday

**Guests Can Spend A Day in Pompeii When
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Page 3**

through Friday; 9 a.m. – 6 p.m. (last *Pompeii* ticket sold at 4:30 p.m.) on Saturday; and noon – 6 p.m. (last *Pompeii* ticket sold at 4:30 p.m.) on Sunday.

A Day in Pompeii won't be the only feature that explores the ancient past at the Museum this summer. "Greece: Secrets of the Past" opens Friday, July 11 in *The Charlotte Observer* IMAX® Dome Theatre, giving viewers the opportunity to explore another of the world's most enlightened cultures. Tickets are \$5 when purchased with *A Day in Pompeii* admission.

A Day in Pompeii is a collaboration of the *Soprintendenza Archeologica di Pompei* and the host American institutions, the Gulf Coast Exploreum Science Center, the Science Museum of Minnesota, the San Diego Natural History Museum and Discovery Place.

For more information on pricing or programming, call 704-372-6261, ext. 300 or visit discoveryplace.org.

A Day in Pompeii is presented by The Leon Levine Foundation. Sponsors of the exhibition include: *Associate sponsor*: Rodgers Builders, Inc. – Our Passion is Building ®; *Supporting sponsors*: Little, US Airways, and Arts & Sciences Council; *Public Education Programs sponsor*: Edifice Inc. General Contractors; *Volcanoes and Interactive Activities sponsor*: Foundation For The Carolinas, *Exhibition sponsors*: KPB Corp. and McColl Foundation. Media and promotional partners for the exhibition include: The Charlotte Observer, Adams Outdoor Advertising, WAXN64, WSOC-TV, Kiss 95.1 FM, K104.7 FM, WSOC 103.7 FM and 90.7 WFAE.

About Soprintendenza Archeologica di Pompei

The *Soprintendenza Archeologica di Pompei* (SAP) is a branch of the *Ministero per i Beni e le Attivita Culturali*, which oversees the safeguarding and enhancement of Italian cultural heritage. The SAP has responsibility for a territory made up of 23 comunes, or municipalities, in the Vesuvian area and runs four archaeological sites (Pompeii, Herculaneum, Stabiae, and Oplontis), as well as a museum, all of which are open to the public.

About Discovery Place

Discovery Place is located in uptown Charlotte at 301 N. Tryon Street. Convenient parking is available in the science center's parking garage – the Carol Grotnes Belk Complex – at the corner of Sixth and Church streets. For more information about Discovery Place, guests should call 704- 372-6261 or visit discoveryplace.org.

One of the top hands-on science museums in the nation and second-most visited site among museums and historical attractions in North Carolina, Discovery Place provides ever-changing, entertaining facilities that foster experiences in areas that range from life science to marine biology. More than a half-million people from all over the United States visit Discovery Place, its IMAX® Dome Theatre and Charlotte Nature Museum each year. Discovery Place is supported, in part, with a Basic Operating Grant from the Arts & Science Council.

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PLEASE NOTE: Images of artifacts included in A Day in Pompeii are available for media use. Visit <http://www.discoveryplace.org/pompeii/home/pompeii-gallery.php> for more information.