

The first Roman Emperor

AUGUSTUS



“The first Roman Emperor”, AUGUSTUS

He was born September 23, 63 bce—he died 19 August 14 ce ,Nola , near Naples (Italy)

He changed his name when he became emperor. His name means “majestic” or “the increaser”. He created a position of supreme authority and complete rule over the military called “The Emperor of Rome”.

His father was the governor of Macedonia.

His mother came from a famous family and was the niece of Julius Caesar.

He was adopted by Caesar as his heir.

He came out on top after years of civil war that followed the death of Julius Caesar .

He was elected to the position of consul.

He was one of three men of the Second Triumvirate.

At the Battle of Actium, his troops defeated Antony and Cleopatra's armies.

Upon their defeat, Antony and Cleopatra committed suicide.

Rome had experienced many years of civil war, he brought peace to the land and began to rebuild much of the city and the empire.

"I found a Rome of bricks; I leave to you one of marble".

He built many roads, buildings, bridges, and government buildings.

He also strengthened the army and conquered much of the land around the Mediterranean Sea.

Under his rule, Rome once again experienced peace and prosperity. This was the period of the Pax Romana.

He set up a mail service and built roads.



He established a permanent fire-fighting and police force for the city of Rome.

He created the law “Lex Papia Poppaea” which rewarded having children and penalized not having children, this was a key measure to have Rome’s population flourish.

He established a standing army for Rome where the soldiers were volunteers who served for a term of 20 years. This was different from the early temporary armies made up of Roman citizens.



He was not only the first, but he was most certainly one of the best emperors Rome ever had.

He had a month named after him ; before the Romans called this month Sextilis.

CALIGULA



Caligula, by name of Gaius Caesar, in full Gaius Caesar Germanicus (born Augustus 31 12 ce, Antium, Latium—died January 24, 41, Rome), Roman emperor from 37 to 41 CE, in succession to Tiberius. For the first seven months of his empire, he was loved by all, very popular with people ,he held banquets and gave many gifts. But he had an illness, he suffered a “brain fever” during early part of his reign.

He had an ill family life where, due to his endless paranoia; many of his close friends died and his family members were banished.

He had turned into one of the most evil men in human history because of his extravagant lifestyle of too much food, wine, and sex. Someone he might have been possessed by a demon.

He had a very good memory. He began ordering the murders of anyone who had ever crossed him, or even disagreed with him on

mundane matters. He even exiled his own wife.

He liked to attend and take part in the torture and execution of many criminals, and personal enemies.

He behaved like a god. Thus, he set up a special temple with a life-sized statue of himself in gold, which was dressed each day in clothing such as he wore himself.

He liked to dress up like many famous gods and goddesses of Rome and demanded that everyone in his presence refer to him as divine.

He proclaimed himself a god, dressing up as Apollo, Venus (a goddess), Mercury and Hercules.

He proclaimed also himself a god of Rome to be worshiped by the people, he ordered that the heads of many statues of Roman gods removed and replaced with his own.

He would walk around his private palace at night and order the sun to rise.

He was eventually assassinated by his own private guards. Even if he supposed he couldn't be killed because he was an immortal god, but he turned out to be rather less immortal than he thought.



He early travelled with his father Germanicus in military campaigns where he wore a miniature army uniform, including boots (*caligae*); and so the troops nicknamed him after the child-size military boots he wore in camp.

He attempted to instate his favorite horse, Incitatus (“Gallop”), as a priest and consul, and ordered a beautiful marble stable built for him, complete with expensive Roman furniture where he would invite special guests to attend dinners with the horse and on which Incitatus never sat.

He cancelled some holidays honoring Augustus.



COMMODUS



Commodus, in full Caesar Marcus Aurelius Commodus Antoninus Augustus, original name (until 180 ce) Lucius Aelius Aurelius Commodus (born Augustus 31, 161 ce, Lanuvium, Latium [now Lanuvio, Italy]—died December 31, 192), Roman emperor from 177 to 192 (sole emperor after 180). His brutal misrule precipitated civil strife that ended 84 years of stability and prosperity within the empire.

He was the son of the philosopher emperor and one of Rome's greatest rulers Marcus Aurelius. With his death the long reign of the five good emperors came to an end and with it so did the Pax Romana (the Roman Peace).

He was the very opposite of his father .

Vain and pleasure-seeking, he virtually bankrupted the Roman treasury and he sought to fill it up again by having wealthy citizens executed for

treason so he could confiscate their property.

Soon, people began plotting against him for real, including his sister.

He executed people, either because they were conspiring against him or because he thought they might do so in the future

People said he was corrupt but also a megalomaniac.

He was indeed a passionate follower of gladiatorial combat, and himself fought in the arena, sometimes dressed as Hercules, for which he awarded himself divine honors, declaring that he was a Roman Hercules.

He adored the gladiatorial games, so much so that he personally entered many of them and fought alongside the gladiators, who were all criminals and slaves, etc. This severely offended the entire Empire, especially the Senate.

He especially adored killing animals, and he killed 100 lions in one day, to the spectators' disgust.



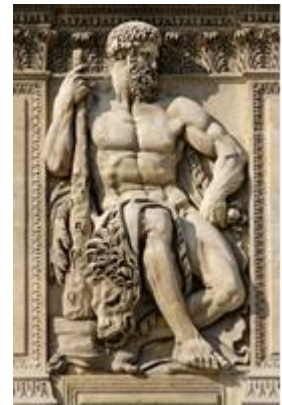
He killed three elephants in the arena, beheaded an ostrich and laughed at the senators attending, brandishing the head and motioning that they were next.

He speared a giraffe to death, an animal which the spectators did not see as fearsome at all.

The senators conspired to have him killed, and poisoned him, but he threw it up.

They then sent in his favorite wrestler, a gladiator named Narcissus, who strangled in his bath. His reign lasted 12 years, from 180 to 192.

He was the emperor immortalized by Joaquin Phoenix in Ridley Scott's *Gladiator* (2000).



DIOCLETIAN



After the defeat and death of the Roman emperor Philip the Arab in 249 CE, the empire endured over three decades of ineffective rulers.

The glory days of Augustus, Vespasian and Trajan were long gone and the once powerful empire suffered both financially and militarily. There were constant attacks along the Danube River as well as in the eastern provinces. Finally, in 284 CE a man rose to the imperial throne who would completely change the face of the empire. His name was Diocletian.

Diocles, who would become known to history as Diocletian, was born of humble origins on December 22, 245 CE in the Balkan province of Dalmatia.

He took retirement in his huge palace-fortress in Spalatum (modern-day Split in Croatia) until his death in October of 311 CE.

He was elected as emperor by the army in 284 after the murder of the existing imperial dynasty.

He was named emperor and killed Aper for murdering Numerian.

He fought and defeated Carinus. After this, he chose Maximian as his co-emperor and named Galerius and Constantius Caesars.

He was a reformer.

His reign was autocratic. He was not a modest emperor. All had to prostrate themselves before him and refer to him as 'Imperator' or 'Our Lord'. Kneeling before the emperor to kiss his hem started with him.

Despite this, he worked hard for the empire he inherited.

His reforms were often extreme and not always successful but ensured that for the twenty five years of his reign, the Roman Empire enjoyed renewed stability.

He ended the "Crisis of the Third Century" by giving up sole control of the Empire, thereby ending the Principate and starting the Dominate.

He set up the rule as the Tetrarchy.

He realized that the empire was too large for one man to manage. His answer was to divide the overall administration between two emperors or Augusti, one for the east and one for the west. The frontiers were quickly brought

back under control.



He split Rome into East and West and ruled the Eastern side with Galerius.

Tetrarchy, he subdivided the empire into 13 large units or dioceses each governed by a vicarius, a substitute or proxy administrator for the emperor.

His reorganization of the fiscal, administrative, and military machinery of the empire laid the foundation for the Byzantine Empire in the East he banned

close-kin marriage a practice followed especially in Egypt. As emperor he created new a new tax and currency system, he also attempted to regulate

the sale price of goods but this failed. In 303 he called for a nation-wide Christian persecution to lower the rising Christian threat, he also banned Christian gatherings and burned all their worship materials.





A religious conservative, he was devoted to the old ways. He instigated a series of measures that became known historically as the 'Great Persecutions', forcing Christians to sacrifice to the old gods

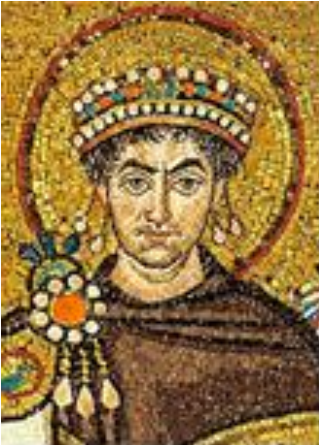
In 303, he celebrated 20 years in power with his first visit to Rome

In 305 he became the first emperor to retire to his palace at Split where he gardened.

The palace had been declared a UNESCO World Heritage Monument. The palace is depicted on the reverse of one 500 banknote.

The last “great” emperor

JUSTINIAN



Justinian I, Latin in full Flavius Justinianus, original name Petrus Sabbatius (born 483, Tauresium, Dardania -probably near modern Skopje, Macedonia—died November 14, 565, Constantinople (now Istanbul, Turkey), Byzantine emperor (527–565), noted for his administrative reorganization of the imperial government and known as the Codex Justinianus (534).

He was not born into a royal family but to a peasant woman named Vigilantia in the Macedonian town of Tauresium.

He was a Christian emperor of the Roman Empire between Antiquity and the Middle Ages. he was sometimes called "The Last of the Romans. But during his life he had some lucky events.

The first one.

His uncle Justin, an ambitious man, was a rising star in the emperor's imperial guard. He adopted him and moved to Constantinople, the capital of the Byzantine Empire. When the emperor died without an heir, Justin seized the position of emperor. When Justin died in 527, he became the new emperor.

There he received a good education learning how to read and write as well as law and history. He was the last Roman emperor to speak Latin.

Because of his hard work he was sometimes called the "emperor who never sleeps."

The second great events of his life.

He married Theodora. Although Theodora was considered below his class but he didn't care.

His dream was to restore the Roman Empire to its former glory. He reconquered most of the former Roman territories.

Three were his passions .



The first one:

he also wanted to preserve the laws of Rome.

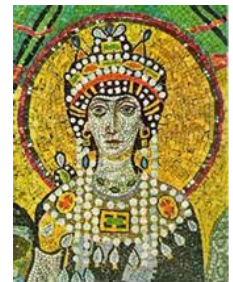
His Code was so well written that it became the basis of laws for many countries throughout the world. This written set of laws became the basis today's international laws.

He introduced new laws that protected both slaves and women.

The second one, he had a passion for the arts and for religion. He had a strong belief in Christianity and wrote laws to protect the church and to suppress

paganism. The third one, he also was a prolific builder. He built throughout the empire churches, dams, bridges, and fortifications, he beautify and fortify Constantinople

These three elements of his passion came together when he rebuilt the Hagia Sophia. which today is the famous mosque 'Aya Sophia' in the Turkish city of Istanbul.



Marcus Aurelius

Antoninus Augustus, original name (until 161 ce) Marcus Annius Verus (born April 26, 121 ce, Rome—died March 17, 180, Vindobona (Vienna), or Sirmium, Pannonia, Roman emperor (ce 161–180), best known for his *Meditations*. Marcus Aurelius has symbolized for many generations in the West the Golden Age of the Roman empire. He was born from a noble family which claimed descent from Numa, second King of Rome.



On his father's death he was adopted by his grandfather, the consular Annius Verus, and there was deep love between them. Antoninus Pius was the heir to Emperor Hadrian.

No emperor had spent such a long time in preparing and waiting to accede to the throne as him.

His nickname was 'Verissimus'.

He was educated by the best teachers of the day and he grew in the strict doctrine of the Stoic philosophy, he dressed plainly and lived simply, to

avoid all softness and luxury and he was kept from the extravagancies of his day he developed a passion for philosophy.

He ruled with his adoptive brother, Lucius Verus until 169, even he was the dominant ruler of us.

When Lucius died he was the only emperor.

He had an arranged marriage to Faustina the Younger. They had a total of thirteen children.

But they died one by one, only one of his sons still lived--the weak and worthless Commodus.

As sole ruler, he spent most of his reign warring with rebellious Parthians, Germans and Britons on the empire's frontier. During his reign there was an ongoing war in Syria, as they fought to acquire land.

He was the last of the "Five Good Emperors", but the father of one of the worst emperors. The weak and worthless Commodus.

He was often referred to as "the wise", the philosophic monarch.

He was the Roman emperor who wrote *Meditations*, a classic text of philosophy and history. He wrote to console himself during his long time away from home.

He was a humane ruler, despite his brutal persecution of the followers of Jesus Christ.

After his death was erected the magnificent column that is in Piazza Colonna in front of Palazzo Chigi to commemorate the victories on the Danube in front of Marcus Aurelius Germanicus. On the top of the column there is his statue.



Nero



Perhaps the most infamous of Rome's emperors, Nero Claudius Caesar (37-68 A.D.) ruled Rome from 54 A.D. until his death by suicide 14 years later. He was one of the most notorious emperors of Rome and knew for executing anyone who didn't agree with him, including his mother.

He was born on December in the city of Antium, Italy near Rome. His father was a consul of Rome. His mother, Agrippina was the sister of Emperor Caligula.

When he was around twelve, Emperor Claudius married Agrippina. Now he became the adopted son of the emperor Claudius .

Many historians believe that his mother poisoned Claudius so he could be emperor. When he became emperor, he was a young man who enjoyed the theater, music and horse racing. His mother wanted to rule Rome through him. In response, he tried to kill her by having her ship sunk.

At beginning he supported the arts, built many public works, and lowered taxes. After he executed people he didn't like including political rivals and some of his wives. He set the office of emperor to suit his desire for an opulent lifestyle, and had absolutely no care for the welfare of the people.

It is said that as he died the world was losing an artist.

He considered himself a virtuoso in music, acting, chariot racing, and literary activity, to the point that he could not tolerate any rivals he started to act crazy and saw himself more as an artist than an emperor. He spent large amounts of money on extravagant parties and began to perform his poetry and music in public.



In 64 AD, a huge fire swept across Rome destroying much of the city. He "played the lyre and sang" while watching Rome burn.

He needed someone to blame for the fire that burnt down Rome so he pointed to the Christians. he had the Christians in Rome rounded up and they were killed in horrible ways including being burned alive, crucified, and thrown to the dogs so began the persecution of Christians in Rome.

After the fire he offered to house the homeless, but it was too late. A rumor had spread of his behavior during the fire.

He built a new palace in the area cleared by the fire. It was called the Domus Aurea, Golden House. This huge palace covered over 100 acres inside the city of Rome with 100 foot tall bronze statue of himself .

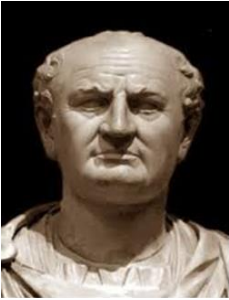
Three events, the murder of his mother, the fire at Rome, and his savage treatment of the Christians distinguish his empire.

The year after he died is called the "Year of the Four Emperors."



Flavian Dynasty Vespasian

"The Emperor who built the Colosseum"



Vespasian, Latin in full Caesar Vespasianus Augustus, original name Titus Flavius Vespasianus (was born November 17, ad 9 , Reate [Rieti], Latium. he died June 24, 79).

He was Roman emperor (ad 69–79) who, though of humble birth, became the founder of the Flavian Dynasty after the civil wars that followed Nero's death in 68.

He was a conscientious and generally tolerant administrator.

His reign was welcomed for its general tranquility and restoration of peace, he rebuilt the empire and he was considered one of the "good emperors"

He ruled after the effects of Caligula, Nero, civil war and the year of the four emperors in a single year.

Once exiled for falling asleep during one of emperor Nero's shows in Greece, he lead Rome through a chaotic time and saved the empire from financial ruins.

He also promoted the keeping of histories by offering financial reward to writers, granting state salaries for the first time to teachers of Latin and Greek rhetoric.

And over my rule of 10 years, he did all that, so he was considered one of the greatest Roman emperors.

In his reign, much money was spent on public works as well as on restoration and beautification of Rome. He turned his attention to the army. In a wholesale reorganization, he restored discipline, removed officers loyal to Vitellius and ended the war in Judaea.

He instituted a nearly peasant-style economy in government (he became the proverbial stingy emperor), he re-imposed the taxes recent emperors had canceled and raised provincial tribute. He invented wholly new taxes. (his tax on public urinals gave rise to his famous witticism; when his son Titus objected to money from such a source, he held a coin under Titus's nose, saying, "Money does not smell.").

He initiated construction of the temple of Peace, near the Forum; a number of public baths and one of the most majestic structures in ancient Rome – the Coliseum (Flavian Amphitheatre), located on the site of the lake of Nero 's Golden House.

Sadly by the time Coliseum was completed, when he was dead.

Beyond Rome, he continued the process of imperial expansion by the annexation of England, Wales, Scotland and Germany in Spain, he granted Latin rights to all native communities so contributed to the rapid Romanization of that province during the Imperial period.

After his death in 79, he was succeeded by his eldest son Titus and thus became the first Roman Emperor to be directly succeeded by his own natural son and establishing the Flavian dynasty.



Titus



He was Vespasian's eldest son one of the two sons but he was very different from my brother Domitian he was a fair ruler instead with Domitian returned Rome to tyranny and fear.

He was a member of the Flavian dynasty, he was the fourth and final emperor of the "year of the four emperors".

He was already a successful politician and general before his father became emperor. He participated to action in Britain and commanded a legion in Judaea under his father.

When Vespasian left Judaea to march on Italy to become emperors , he fought against the Jewish rebels.

He successfully crushed the rebels and captured and destroyed the temple in Jerusalem. When he returned home to Rome, he was made commander

of the Praetorian Guard.

He loved Berenice, a Jewish princess.

His role as an Emperor was short and remembered as a good emperor. Just two years after he took the throne, he died. Rome after his death faced a very different dictator.

He had good qualities and was good-looking, cultivated and friendly.

He was a calm and fair emperor.

His reign was filled with challenges. During his rule, the Roman Empire faced disasters the volcano eruption in Mount Vesuvius the destruction of the cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum and Rome plague.



He was popular thanks to his generosity during these natural disasters, during which he generously contributed to relieve the sufferers.

He also inaugurated the Roman Coliseum, the amphitheater that his father had built.

He opened it with 100 days of games and extravagant events such as gladiatorial combat, mock naval battles, fights between wild animals .



In Rome there is The Arch dedicated to him , which stands in the Forum Romanum in Rome even today, marks his victory in the war against the Jews.

His life has been commemorated by authors and artists throughout the world in the form of literature, paintings, depictions and so on.