



## Imperial Rome and Ostia

### *Monumental buildings*

#### **Colin Chant**

Among the first monumental structures to explore the potentials of concrete building technology were the great imperial palaces of Rome. The most magnificent of these was the Domus Augustiana, begun by the emperor Domitian. The remains of the palace still dominate the Palatine Hill, overlooking the Circus. The ransacking of the palace's treasures over the centuries has left exposed the massive concrete vaults that enabled a platform to be built out from the slopes of the Palatine Hill. This two-storied arcade of brick-faced concrete supported a wing added to the palace by the Emperor Septimus Severus more than a century later. By contrast the most important temple buildings, such as the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus on the Capitoline Hill, generally stuck to traditional materials and styles, inspired by Greek architecture. In the Forum Boarium a much smaller temple built in a similar style at the end of the Republican period has survived. Such temples were rectangular in plan, with a deep portico and high podium. In this temple, both the podium and the portico columns are made of travertine. The main room and attached columns are built in tufa.