



## Imperial Rome and Ostia

### *Roman industries*

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The fullery played a prominent part in the everyday life of Roman cities, equivalent to modern dry cleaners. These large tanks in the centre were used for washing. In particular, wool garments such as togas were cleaned, using a mixture of urine and wood ash as a form of detergent before being rinsed clean and hung out to dry. These pots were used for treading material that was being dyed.

Another important urban industry at Ostia is bread making. The process was reliant on a considerable labour force. Grain was poured into the top of these stone mills which were turned by donkeys tied to a wooden arm connected to the mill by these holes.

The use of donkeys required that the working area was paved with durable material. As on the roads, blocks of volcanic basalt were used.

Evidence for this urban manufacturing process is found on reliefs from a baker's tomb in Rome. The baker sells some bread at the front of the shop behind flour is being produced by donkey driven mills. On another relief the flour is mixed into the dough and the dough is shaped into loaves. The loaves are then placed in a dome-shaped oven.

At one of the bakeries in Ostia is the restored remains of a very large oven. Above the hearth is what is left of a substantial dome in which the bread was baked.