

A large Roman-era villa is discovered

May 2 2006

Italian archeologists have reportedly discovered the remains of a huge Roman villa near Florence -- the first ever in the popular tourist area.

"Villas like these were fully fledged factories for the production of wine, olive oil, meat, corn and other products," said archaeologist Fausto Berti, who led the dig at Montelupo Fiorentino.

"We've found big animal pens, warehouses and even a workshop for making ceramic vases. The owners were self-sufficient," he told the Italian news service ANSA.

The 500-meter-square villa has fully equipped baths with all the areas Romans used to produce various levels of heat, warm water and steam -- and a cooling area.

The Montelupo villa is open to the public during weekends but reservations are required.

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Citation: A large Roman-era villa is discovered (2006, May 2) retrieved 20 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2006-05-large-roman-era-villa.html>

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