

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Question 01:**

Explain the various factors that influenced the classical Roman Architecture.

### **Answer:**

- The Romans never became a sea faring people like the Greeks, nor did they send out colonists of the same description to all parts of the then known world.
- There were few rival cities in Italy at this period, and the small towns, being less jealous of their separate independence, the Roman power could be built up by a gradual absorption of small states, a process that was never completed by Athens or Sparta.
- The position of Italy enabled her to act as the intermediary in spreading over the continent of Europe the arts of civilization.
- Overall, the disciplined and ordered approach to architecture was clearly effective
- In Italy marble, terra-cotta, stone, and brick were largely used even for the more important buildings.
- In Rome the following materials were at hand '.Travertine, a hard limestone from Tivoli ; Tiifa, a volcanic substance of which the hills of Rome are mainly composed ; and Peperino, a stone of volcanic origin from Mount Albano.
- Roman architecture, as it spread itself over the whole of the then known world, was influenced naturally by the materials found in the various parts where it planted itself, but concrete, in conjunction with brick and stone casing or banding, was the favourite material.
- The north has the climate of the temperate region of continental Europe ; central Italy is more genial and sunny ; while the south is almost tropical.
- The heathen religion of ancient Rome being looked upon as part of the constitution of the state, the worship of the gods came eventually to be kept up only as a matter of state policy.
- The emperor then received divine honours, and may almost be described as the leader of the Pantheon of deities embraced by the tolerant and wide-spreading Roman rule. Officialism therefore naturally stamped its character on the temple architecture.

- The Etruscans, probably an Aryan people, who appear to have been settled in Italy before authentic history begins, and who were great builders
- Long before history begins the Greeks and Italians had separated into distinct nations, and the Italians had further split up into separate nations among themselves. The common form of government in ancient Italy resembled that of Greece, consisting of towns or districts joined together in leagues.
- The foundation of Rome is of uncertain date, but is generally taken at B.C. 750.

### **Question 02:**

Elaborate the architecture of the Forums with examples.

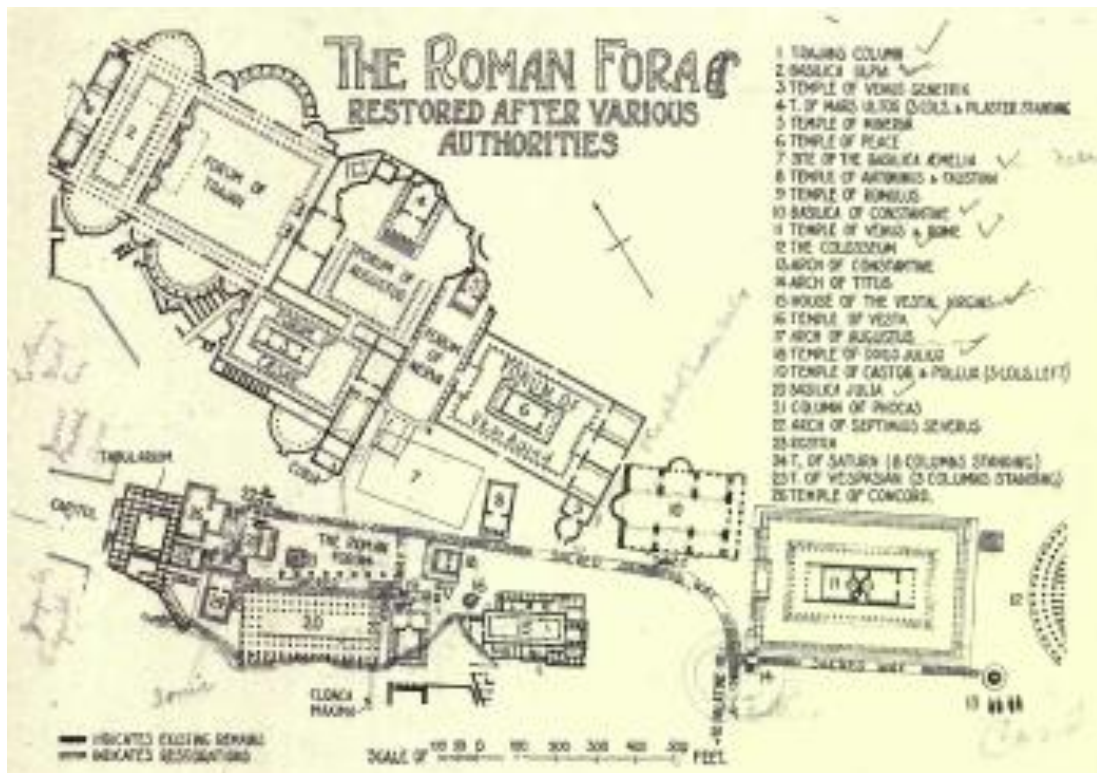
### **Answer:**

- The Forum was an open space used as a meeting place and market, or a rendezvous for political demonstrators.
- The forum was usually surrounded by porticos, colonnades and public buildings, such as temples, basilicas (halls of justice), senate house, and shops, and was adorned with pillars of victory and memorial statues of great men.

### **Forum Romanum:**

- The " Forum Romanum " was the oldest, and grouped around it were some of the most important historical buildings.
- It is a rectangular forum (plaza) surrounded by the ruins of several important ancient government buildings at the centre of the city of Rome.
- Citizens of the ancient city referred to this space, originally a market place, as the Forum Magnum, or simply the Forum.

- It was for centuries the center of Roman public life: the site of triumphal processions and elections; the venue for public speeches, criminal trials, and gladiatorial matches; and the nucleus of commercial affairs.



### Question 03:

Explain the architecture of Roman temples, its types with examples.

### Answer:

- The Roman temples were the result of the amalgamation of the Etruscan and Greek types, for they resembled in many respects Greek examples, but their prostyle arrangement and the use of the podium was derived from Etruscan temples.
- The characteristic temple is known as pseudo-peripteral, and had no side colonnades as was usual in Greek examples, "the order of columns being attached to the flank walls and arranged as a prostyle portico towards the front only.
- Steps were provided at the principal end, between projecting wing walls, which often supported groups of statuary, and were continued along the flanks and back of the temple as a podium or continuous pedestal

The Temple of Mars Ultor, Rome:

- B.C. 42-2
- Stood in the Forum of Augustus, in a precinct surrounded by an enclosing wall 100 feet high.
- It was one of the largest Roman temples, having columns 58 feet in height, but there are only three columns and a pilaster remaining.



#### The Temple of Venus and Rome:

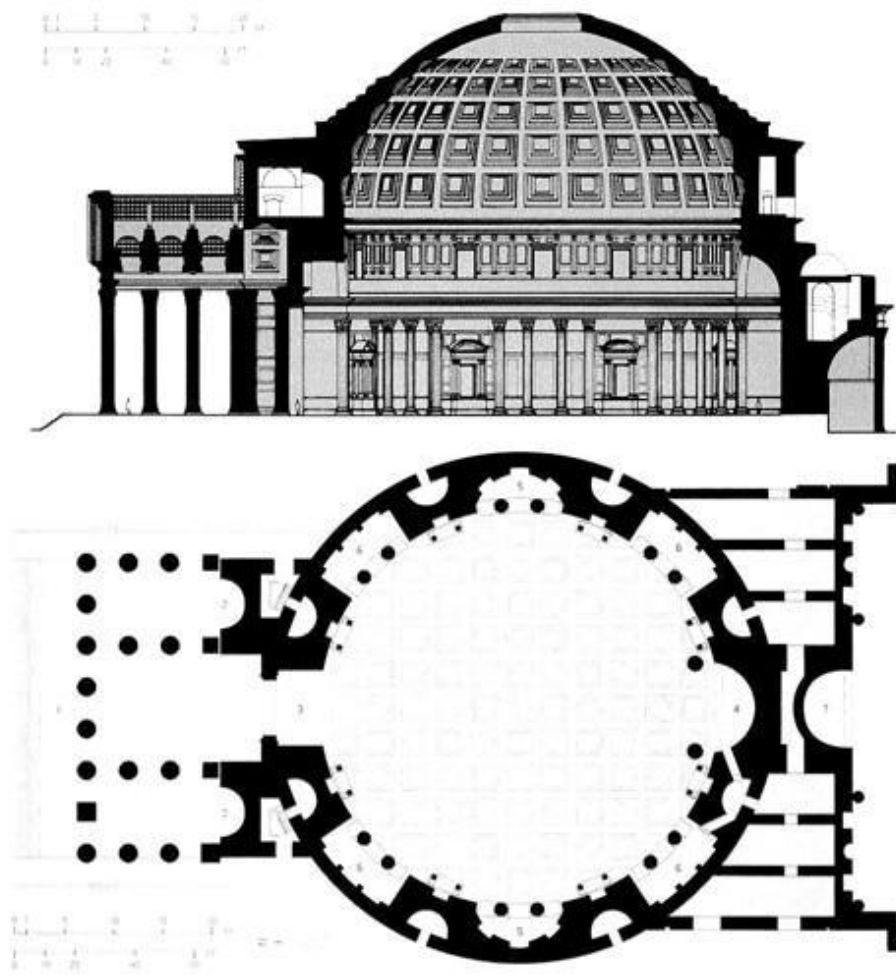
- The Temple of Venus and Rome (A.D. 123-135), had a peculiar plan consisting of two cellas, each provided with an apse placed back to back, and a pronaos at each end.
- It was pseudo-dipteral decastyle, the peristyle having twenty columns on the flanks, and the cella walls were of extra thickness to take the thrust of the vault.
- Internally there were niches for statues, and the cella was crowned with a hemispherical coffered vault, the apses having semi-domes.
- This temple was raised on a platform and stood in a large enclosure, entered through imposing gateways, surrounded by a colonnade of nearly 200 columns of red and grey Egyptian granite and red porphyry, occupying in all an area of about 540 by 340 feet.

#### **Question 04:**

Detail out the architecture features of the Pantheon in Rome.

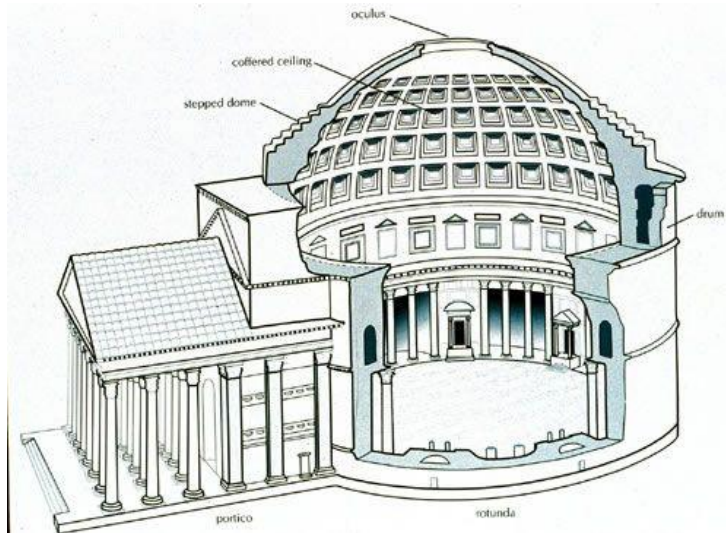
**Answer:**

- 27 BC – 14 AD
- The Pantheon means "temple of every god"
- It is a building in Rome, Italy, on the site of an earlier building commissioned by Marcus Agrippa during the reign of Augustus. The present building was completed by the emperor Hadrian and probably dedicated about 126 AD. He retained Agrippa's original inscription, which has confused its date of construction.
- The circular portion, known as the Rotunda, occupies the site of an older uncovered piazza, used as a "nymphaeum," or place for plants, flowers, and running water, the level of its floor being 8 feet below the present level.
- The building is circular with a portico of large granite Corinthian columns under a pediment. A rectangular vestibule links the porch to the rotunda, which is under a coffered concrete dome, with a central opening (oculus) to the sky. Almost two thousand years after it was built, the Pantheon's dome is still the world's largest unreinforced concrete dome. The height to the oculus and the diameter of the interior circle are the same, 43.3 metres (142 ft).



- In front of this “nymphaeum,” and facing towards the south, was a decastyle portico, forming a frontispiece to a three-cell temple of the Etruscan type, built by Agrippa.
- The present Rotunda was erected by the Emperor Hadrian, in A.D. 120-124, on the site of the more ancient "nymphaeum," the portico to the Etruscan temple being taken down and re-erected at the higher level.
- As rebuilt this portico was made octastyle instead of decastyle, and was made to face the north instead of the south.
- The Rotunda (now the Church of S. Maria Rotonda) is a circular structure having an internal diameter of 142 feet 6 inches, which is also its internal height.
- The walls, of concrete (opus incertum), with a layer of tiles every three feet in height, are 20 feet in thickness, and have eight great recesses, one

of which forms the entrance ; three of the remaining seven are semicircular exedrae, the other four being rectangular on plan. Two columns are placed on the front line of these recesses, above which are relieving arches.



- The eight piers have niches entered from the exterior of the building, formed in three heights, of which the lower are semicircular on plan, and are 19 feet high to the springing of their hemispherical heads, the second tier have their floor on the same level as the cornice over the inner order, and the third tier are level with and entered from the second cornice of the exterior.
- In front of the Rotunda is the Corinthian octastyle portico, 110 feet wide by 60 feet deep in the centre, the first, third, sixth and eighth columns having two others behind them. At the back of the portico are niches, and staircases by which to ascend to the various parts of the edifice.
- The columns, 42 feet 6 inches high, in front of the recesses in the interior, are believed to be part of the original design of Hadrian's architect. The lower third of these columns is cabled, and the upper portion is fluted.
- The marble facing to the walls between, and the columns, entablature, and pediments of the projecting altars are later additions.
- The attic or upper story was originally ornamented with porphyry or marble pilasters, with capitals, six of which are in the British Museum, of white marble and panelling of giallo antico, serpentine, and pavonazetto,

but in 1747 this marble panelling was removed and the present stucco decoration inserted.

- The dome or cupola is a hemisphere, having its inner surface coffered in five ranges. The manner in which the sinkings or mouldings are regulated or foreshortened so as to- be seen from below is worthy of notice.
- The dome, although described by Middleton to be of concrete, was found by Chedanne to be built of brickwork laid in almost horizontal courses up to the fourth range of coffers, and also near the central opening at the summit.
- The intermediate portion was not examined, but it is held that a series of arches may have been formed in this portion, so as to relieve from pressure the recessed
- openings below.
- The lighting is effected solely by one circular unglazed opening, 27 feet in diameter, formed in the crown of the dome, and still retaining its circular bronze cornice
- This method of lighting may have been a symbolic meaning in thus imitating the appearance of the vault of the heavens in the temple of all the gods, the idea being that the worship of Jupiter should take place in a building open to the sky.
- "One great eye opening upon heaven is by far the noblest conception for lighting a building to be found in Europe."
- The circular portion was originally faced with marble up to the lower string cornice, the upper portion being faced with stucco decorated with pilasters,
- The dome, which has its lower portion formed in steps, was originally covered with bronze gilded plates, but these were removed to Constantinople by Constans II in 655, and replaced with sheets of lead.
- The octastyle portico has monolith Corinthian columns, 46 feet 6 inches high, 5 feet in diameter at the base

