

Press release
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An unknown Roman Quarter found in the heart of Metz

A team from the Institut National de Recherches Archéologiques Préventives (Inrap) is in the process of excavating a Roman quarter in the heart of the city of Metz. Curated by the State (Drac of the Lorraine region), the excavation of this vast site (15,000 m²) precedes the construction of a car park under the future Centre-Pompidou-Metz. This operation will employ at least fifteen archaeologists for a total of 5,300 working days, including post excavation analysis, until February 2007,

A Gallo-Roman Quarter near the amphitheatre

A few metres from the amphitheatre, discovered in 1902, the Inrap team is currently uncovering a hitherto unknown Gallo-Roman urban quarter. This is the first time an excavation of Roman levels on such a scale has been possible in Metz. The excavation will inevitably increase our knowledge of the evolution of the city over five centuries. The buildings on site are arranged on both sides of a road lined with pavements. They date to the 1st to 3rd centuries B.C. Some of the rooms have under floor heating (hypocausts) and others are decorated with stucco, marble and wall paintings. Some column bases are still in place. Significant change occurs during the 4th century, while during the 5th to 6th centuries, numerous craftsmen arrive (metallurgy, etc.).

The life of a quarter under a microscope

Pottery, glass fragments, bone combs, and weaving tools all contribute to our understanding of the daily life of the inhabitants of this quarter from the end of the 1st century to the 3rd century. Abundant animal remains (beef, pork, veal, poultry) discovered in large pits inform us about the diet of the period, as well as the numerous craft activities practiced. The natural conditions of the site, particularly the rise of the water table since the Roman period, have made possible the preservation of organic materials, such as the wooden lining of a well, shoe soles and seeds.



Developer: CA23/SAREMM
Curation: DRAC/Regional Archaeology Service of Lorraine
Archaeological research: Inrap
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