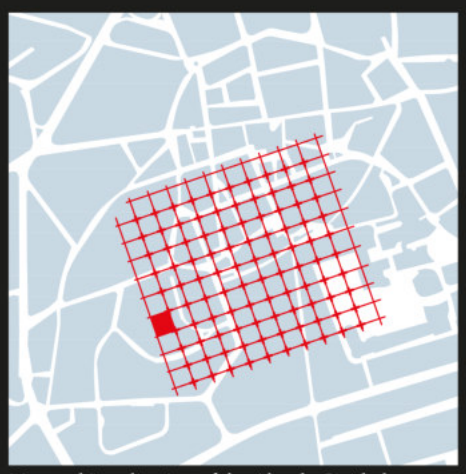
Interior panoramic of the baths

The only existing Roman public baths found in Braga to date are situated on Alto da Cividade hill, inside a large protected, fenced-off area.
The building was first discovered in 1977 when the first excavations began at this site. After having grasped the importance of these archaeological ruins, work continued here until 1980 when the dig was interrupted.
The excavations were resumed in the 90's and conclude at the end of 1999. These Roman baths are classified as a National Monument and this is now a protected site.



Map and Localization of the Alto da Cividade Roman Baths site

BRAGA
Município

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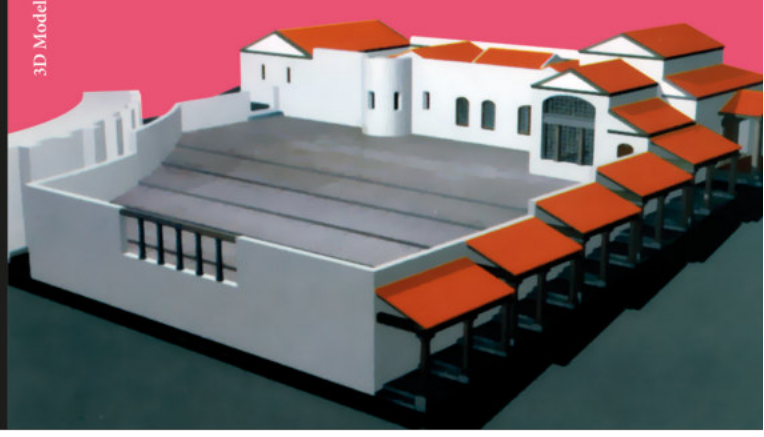
BRACARA AUGUSTA 1

Alto da Cividade Roman Baths



3D Model of the Alto da Cividade Roman bath, Phase I (beginning of the 2nd Century).

Plan of the Roman baths and how they operated

The Alto da Cividade baths were constructed at the beginning of the 2nd Century on top of a previously existing building. They are rectangular in shape and orientated Northwest/southeast The entrance faces southwards onto a small colonnaded porch (1) and gives access to a forecourt or atrium (2). The first room is the *apodyderium* (6) which housed a cold water pool (7). This room would have been heated in the winter and it is where the bathers would have undressed. They would then have passed through a corridor (8) which would have given access to the *palaestra* (24), a large open space where they would carry out their physical exercises, or they would have entered the *frigidarium* (9), where the circuit of baths began. They would have followed a route of cold-hot-cold baths and, starting at the *frigidarium* (9), they would then follow on to the *tepidarium* (11 and 12), finally entering the hottest room of them all which was called the *caldarium* (13). They would then return to the *frigidarium* (9) working their way back through all the pools and, probably back to the gymnasium (*palestra*) (24). The hot rooms were heated by the construction of a system of hollow under floor chambers which were called *hypocausts*, where hot air, which was produced by furnaces (*praefurnia*) (Pr 1, Pr2 and Pr3), would circulate. This hot air would also circulate around the walls through a system of tubes or hollow bricks called *tubuli lacteri*, thus guaranteeing an extremely efficient method of heating for some of the rooms as would have occurred with the use of the boiler (13). These baths had various service areas, the largest being at the north part of the building (14, 19, 20 and 21). This area was designed to store large quantities of firewood which was burned, not only to assure that the rooms were constantly heated, but also to maintain a steady supply of hot water needed for the pools. The water was heated in boilers which were placed above the furnaces and then circulated though the walls through a system of tubes.

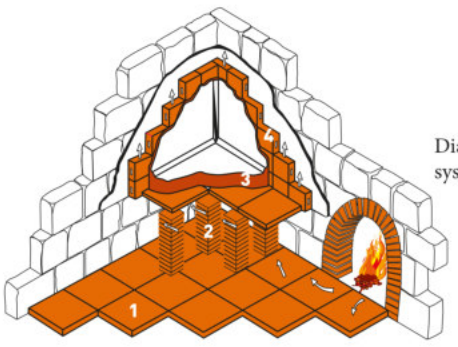
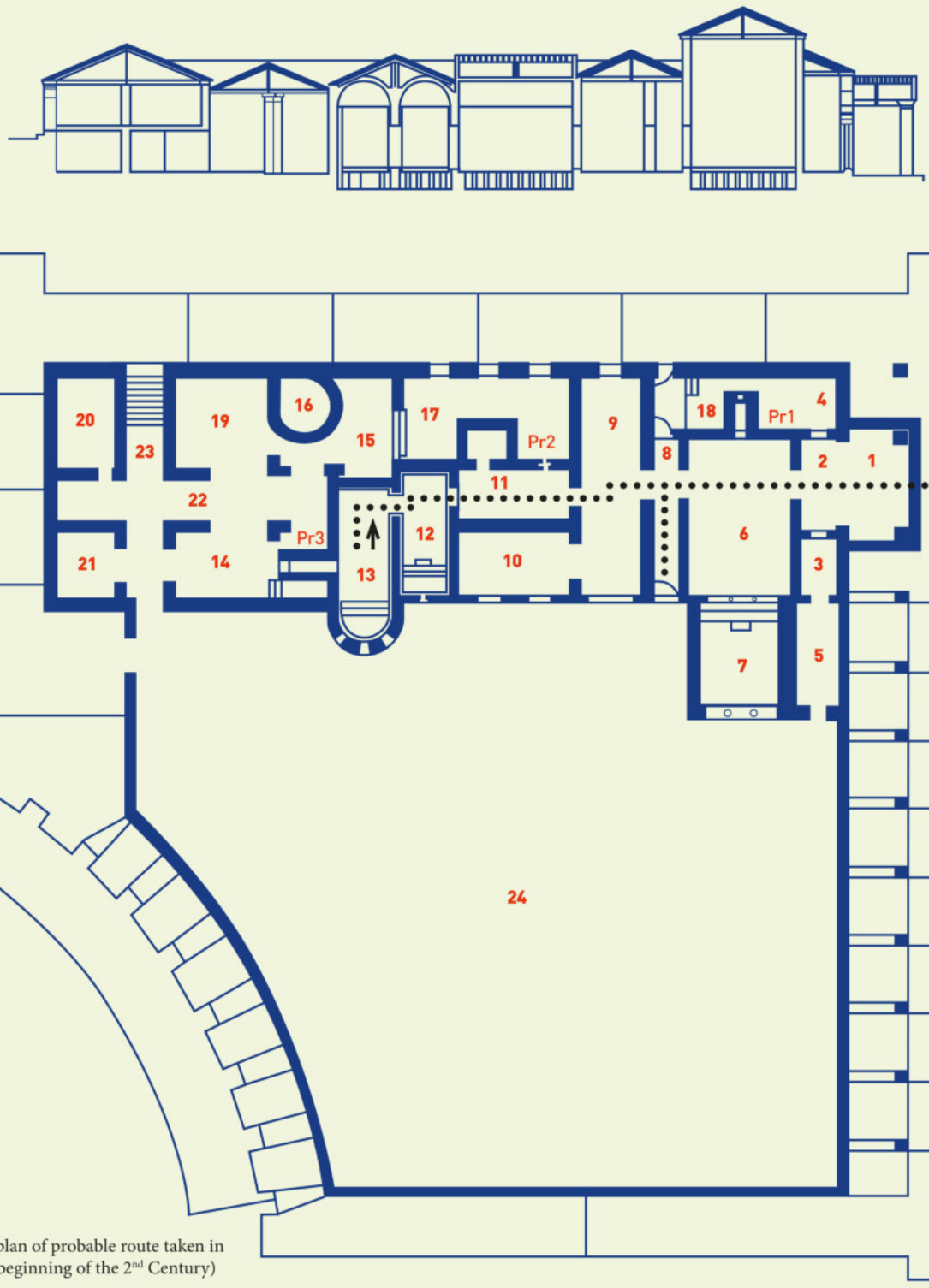


Diagram showing the heating system of the spa rooms:
1. *area;*
2. *pilae;*
3. *suspensura;*
4. *tubuli laterici*



Cross-section and plan of probable route taken in the baths, phase I (beginning of the 2nd Century)