

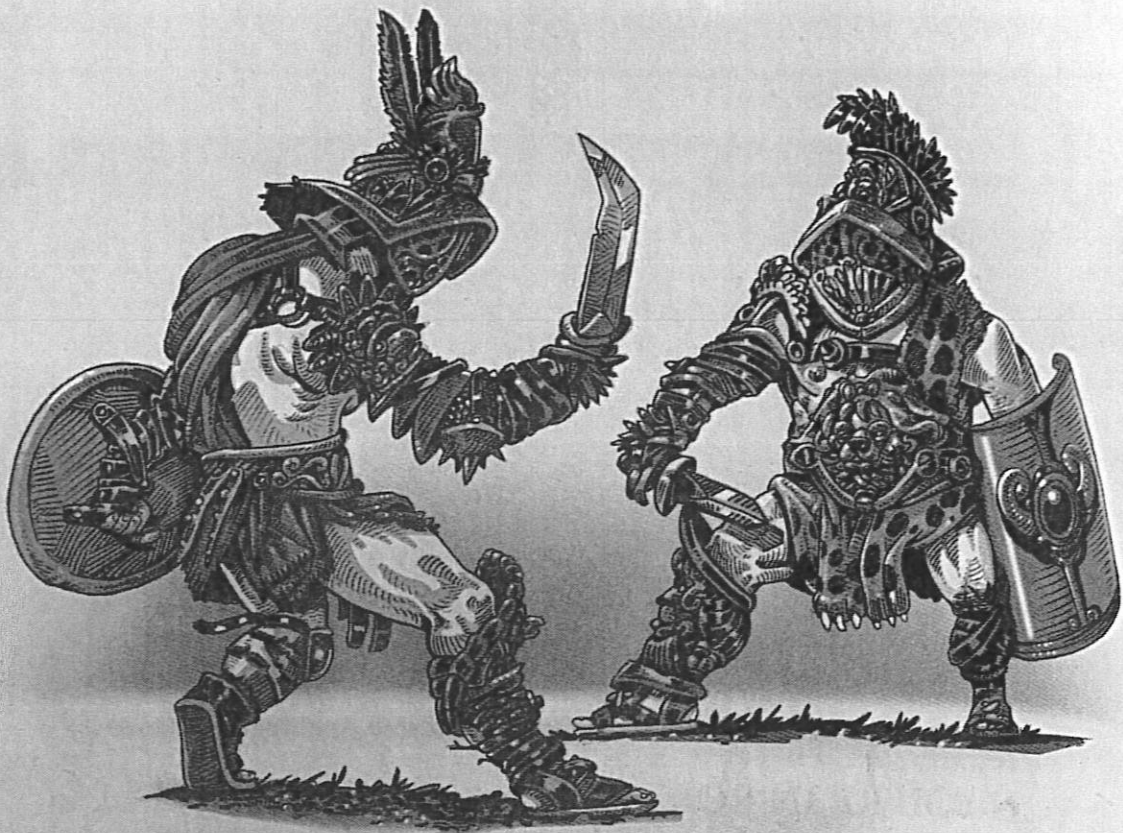
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## ***ROMAN ENTERTAINMENT***

WHEN YOU'RE IN ROME, you may be attacked, robbed, or chased by an angry mob, but you will never, ever be bored. Rome is full of entertainment choices for your viewing pleasure. For those with refined tastes, there is world-class theater, art, and even famous poets like Ovid, Virgil, and Horace who perform live in public. For those with less refined tastes, the Romans also enjoy a great variety of sports and spectacles, most of which involve witnessing violent death, all for a very attractive price. There are the chariot races where charioteers are killed, the gladiator matches where gladiators are killed, the beast hunts where wild animals are killed, and the spectacles where criminals are killed. So many wonderful options to choose from!

### **Gladiator Matches**

If you really want to take advantage of all Rome has to offer, why not check out a gladiator match?



Roman gladiators fight wild animals, condemned criminals, or other gladiators, all for the entertainment of cheering crowds. This is largely because reality TV does not get invented until the twentieth century.

Most gladiators are European slaves or sentenced criminals, but a few are willing volunteers. Some of the most famous gladiators are women, others are dwarfs, and a few, including Caligula and Commodus, are emperors.

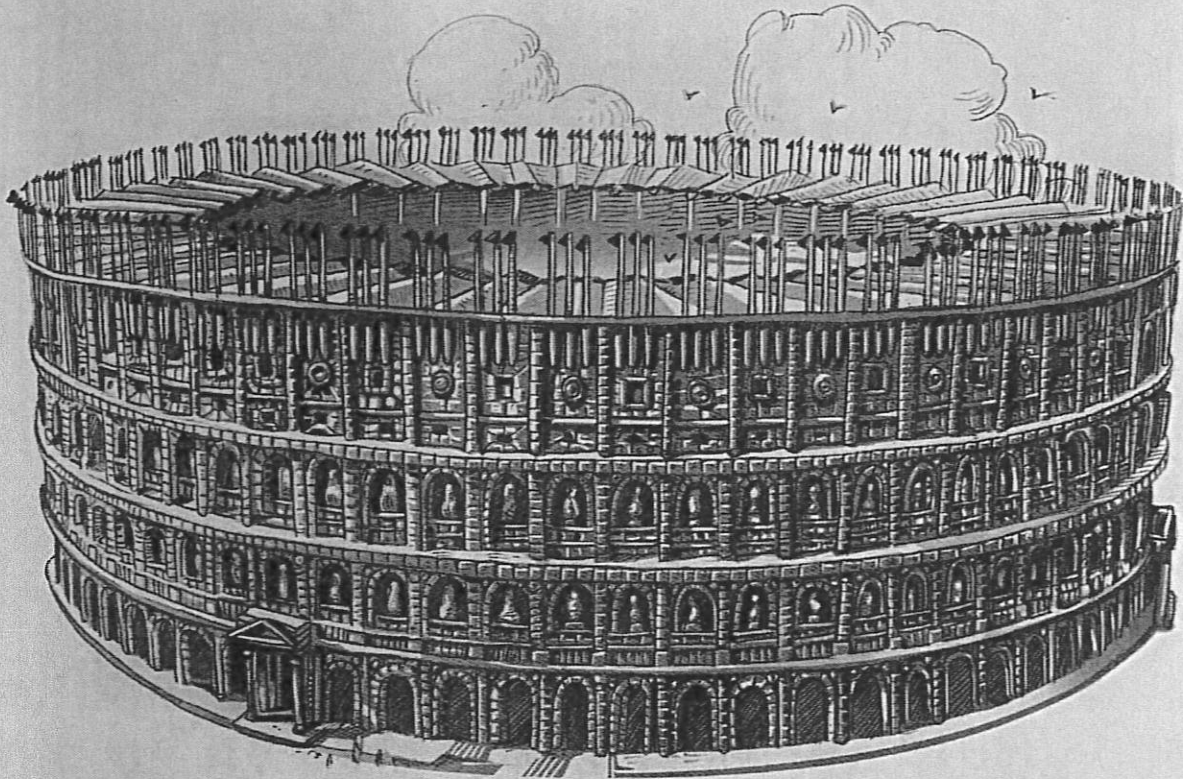
There are four hundred gladiator arenas throughout the Roman Empire at its height. If you want to become a gladiator and try your hand at combat, keep in mind that a gladiator's career almost never lasts more than ten matches.\* Also, as a beginner,

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\*If you celebrate Christmas, you may want to keep that under your hat. Several Roman emperors, particularly Nero, get their kicks by feeding Christians to wild animals in the Colosseum.



your fee for your first match is only about one thousand sesterces.

Roughly eight thousand gladiators are killed per year across the empire. The average gladiator dies by age twenty-seven. On the upside, gladiators can become wildly famous and earn up to one hundred thousand sesterces per fight.



## THE FLAVIAN AMPHITHEATER



Food: ★

Noise Level: Deafening

Decor: ★★★

Wheelchair Accessible: No ✕

Service: ★

Accepts Credit Cards: No ✕

Cost: \$\$\$\$

Attire: No knives

The Flavian Amphitheater is more popularly known as the Roman Colosseum. It is the ancestor of every sports stadium in the world. When you show your ticket, you're directed through one of eighty entrance gates, up four tiers of seating, and then to your row and assigned seat. The building is gigantic, holding fifty-five thousand spectators, and has a retractable canvas roof to provide shade.

Here's what some of our readers have to say about the Roman Colosseum:

★ "I paid fifty sesterces for my family's tickets, and they were all fed to the lions. I want my money back!"

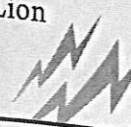
—Roger G., Santa Fe, NM

★★ "I only got to see one family fed to the lions. I want my money back!"

—Bob R., Tampa, FL

★ "I only got to eat one family. And I want to go back to Africa."

—Lion



## PEOPLE TO HAVE LUNCH WITH: SPARTACUS

Spartacus is a gladiator who leads a slave rebellion that almost topples the Roman Republic in 73 BC. He is originally a Thracian mercenary who joins the Roman army, regrets his decision, and tries to desert. Spartacus is sold into slavery as a punishment. Like many slaves with size and strength, he is trained to become a gladiator.

The thing about training slaves to fight is it can come back to bite you. Spartacus and seventy of his fellow



gladiators fight their way free and set about pillaging the Roman countryside. Eventually, some ninety thousand slaves join the uprising. The slaves score several stunning victories over the Roman army.

Finally Crassus, the richest man in Rome, uses his own money to raise legions of soldiers to fight Spartacus. During their final battle, Spartacus fights his way across the entire battlefield, kills both the centurions guarding Crassus, but fails to kill Crassus himself. Spartacus is believed to be killed in this battle, though his body is never found.

Crassus wins a decisive victory, ending the revolt and capturing six thousand slaves. He crucifies all six thousand, leaving their bodies strung up on crosses along a 120-mile stretch of the Appian Way, the main highway to Rome.

## Beast Hunts

Beast hunts are a popular form of entertainment where Romans can visit an arena and watch people hunt wild animals, watch wild animals hunt people, or watch wild animals hunt each other. Thousands of animals are killed in this way, and more than a few people. On April 21, AD 248, to celebrate the thousandth anniversary of Rome's founding, the Colosseum is home to the massacre of:

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\*A centurion is an army officer who commands a large group of soldiers. If you want to become a centurion, you need to be a skilled warrior, preferably at least thirty, and able to read. There's no overtime pay and the health benefits are pretty lousy, but it's a great way to get in shape before beach season.

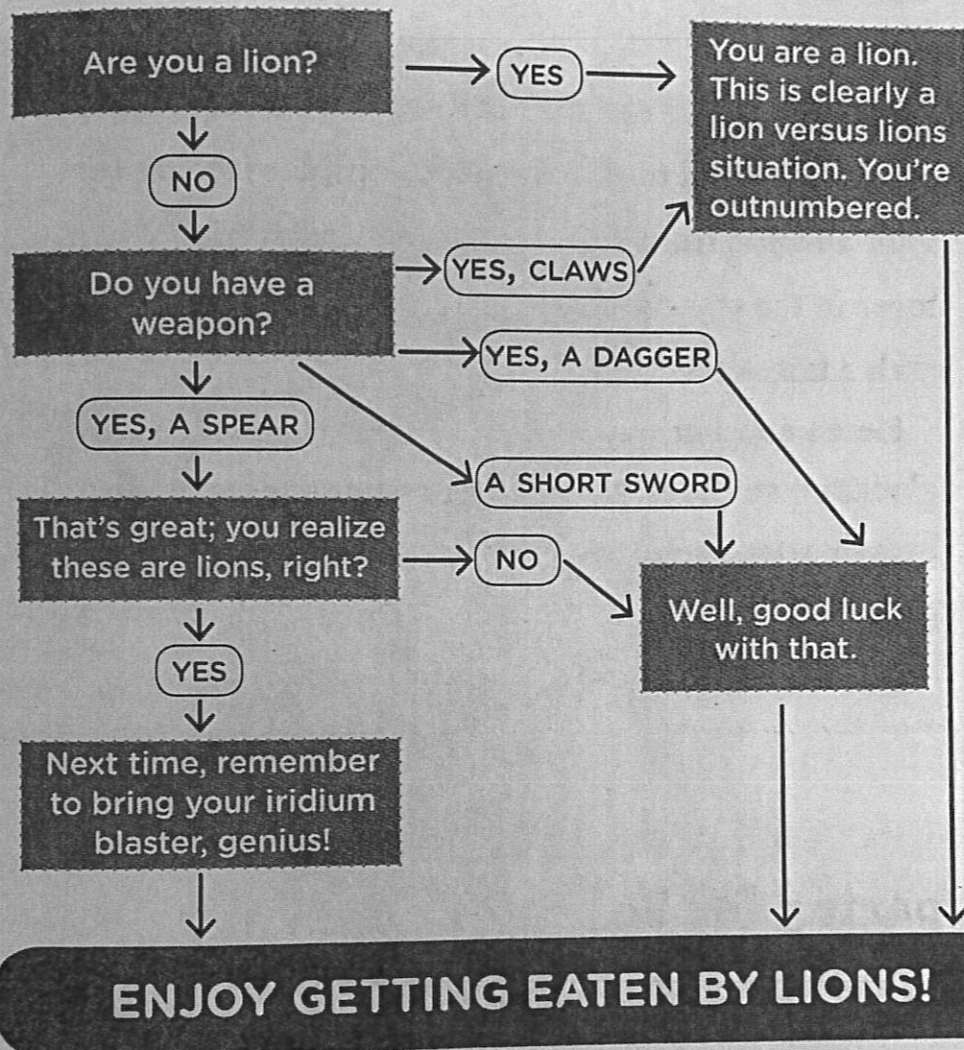
32 elephants  
10 elk  
20 wild asses  
10 tigers  
40 wild horses  
60 lions  
30 leopards  
10 hyenas  
10 giraffes  
6 hippos  
1 rhinoceros  
2,000 gladiators  
several dozen ostriches

Given the massive Roman appetite for watching exotic animals get killed, it is worth mentioning that within a century of the Colosseum opening, most of the wild animals in Northern Africa are wiped out of existence.

If all this sounds delightful, the Romans wholeheartedly agree with you. They are often fanatically excited about these events. At a gladiator match in Pompeii in AD 59, fans of the local gladiators break out in a fight with fans from another city. The ensuing riot kills so many people that Pompeii is banned from holding gladiator matches for ten years. This is actually pretty tame compared to the Nika Riot in Constantinople in AD 532. The Nika Riot starts with a hotly contentious chariot race and ends five days later with thirty thousand dead and half the city burned down.



# WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE THROWN TO THE LIONS IN THE ROMAN COLOSSEUM



**Note:** *Have you been fed to the lions? Are you looking for a good lawyer? Cicero is Rome's top lawyer, and he insists we plug his legal services. No job is too small for Cicero, provided it offers him enormous publicity. Remember: Cicero may lose his head, but he will never lose your court case! Mention this ad and receive a 10 percent discount!*

## PRANKING THE PAST

Between your iridium blaster and your time machine, you have unlimited opportunities to prank the unsuspecting people of the past. If Rome's wild beast hunts seem a bit cruel to the animals, consider freeing the wild animals from the Colosseum and setting them loose in the streets of Rome. That might give the animals a fair shake.

Here's another way to level the playing field. Many gladiator matches pit weaponless prisoners against heavily armed soldiers. Time to even the score. Transport a platoon of US Marines armed with grenade launchers into the arena. See how it goes.

## Preparing for Your Next Journey

If you're still alive at this point, you're probably getting the hang of ancient Rome. You know where to eat, where to shop, and how to avoid getting urine thrown on your head. You're now ready to tackle more dangerous and exciting adventures, like marching with the Roman army as it conquers Europe. To do this, you're going to need to meet one of the most powerful people in history....



NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

## QUESTIONS

1. WHAT ARE SOME OF THE WAYS TO STAY ENTERTAINED IN ROME FOR THOSE WITH "REFINED TASTES"?

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2. WHAT ARE THE NAMES OF THE THREE MOST FAMOUS POETS OF ANCIENT ROME?

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3. WHAT ARE SOME OF THE WAYS TO STAY ENTERTAINED IN ROME FOR THOSE WITH "LESS REFINED TASTE"?

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4. WHO DO THE GLADIATORS FIGHT?

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5. MOST GLADIATORS ARE... (FINISH THE SENTENCE)

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6. HOW MANY GLADIATOR ARENAS ARE IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE AT ITS HEIGHT?

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7. HOW MANY GLADIATORS ARE KILLED EACH YEAR (ROUGHLY)?

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8. WHAT IS THE AVERAGE GLADIATOR LIFE SPAN?

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9. HOW MANY ENTRANCES WERE IN THE FLAVIAN AMPHITHEATRE?

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10. WHO WAS SPARTICUS?

A. WHAT DID HE DO?

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B. WHERE WAS HE FROM?

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C. WHY IS SPARTICUS FAMOUS?

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11. WHAT IS THE NAME OF THE MAIN HIGHWAY TO ROME?

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12. WHAT ARE BEAST HUNTS?

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13. WHAT WAS THE NIKA RIOT?

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