



1

The United Nations and **International Law** are founded on ideas first developed by the Romans. The Romans invented the concept of citizenship. The phrase “civis romanus sum” (“I am a Roman citizen”) could be used anywhere in the empire to demand legal protection. The Romans published their code of civil law on tablets in the forum so that it was clear that these rules were quite literally set in stone.



2

Rome built the largest international **empire** in ancient history. At its height, the Roman empire stretched across much of Europe, northern Africa, and the Middle East, and one in four people on earth lived under Roman rule.



3

They built the first international **communications infrastructure** system. With a sophisticated engineering model, they built roads that allowed troops, ideas, taxes, and goods to easily travel to and from Rome. They created a common currency, built lighthouses, and defended the seas against pirates. Europe was not this well connected again until the 19th century.



4

The Romans' Latin language became a **common language** spoken throughout the world and influenced the development of all European languages, even those with non-Latin roots. 60% of English words come from Latin. Roman texts are still read today to inspire and inform people on leadership, government and public service.



5

Romans were extraordinary **architects and engineers**. They invented new ways to build arches and rounded ceilings and developed a cement that is far more durable than most modern cements. This is the reason that many of their buildings are still at least partially intact today.



7

Rome was the first city in history to reach a **million inhabitants**, in the year 0. The forum Romanum was not only the world's largest marketplace, it was a true melting pot of cultures, languages, religions, and ethnicities. There were merchants from around the globe and thousands of slaves who had been captured in other countries by the conquering Roman troops. They were not all in forced labor: many of Rome's famous educators and artists were slaves.



8

Romans had their belief system honoring a community of gods, but they were in general quite **tolerant of other religions**. The Romans did not force their religion on the countries they conquered, and many different cults and religions had representation in the city.



9

Rome had the first paid professional military in history that became the **most powerful army on earth** of its time. It didn't have the most advanced weapons, but it had an organizational structure and training regimen that is still copied by armies today. Service in the army was at first the civic duty of the wealthy, then it became a paid job



10

The Roman Paradox: Rome has been an inspiration for people building democracies and for brutal dictators. The Republic, with strong, elected institutions, lasted from 509 until about 133. After a period of civil war, the Republic ended when Julius Caesar, a military leader, consolidated power. His adopted son Augustus was crowned first Emperor in 31 BC. Under the emperors who followed, the Roman empire expanded to its greatest extent by 200CE.



6

The Roman Republic, founded in 510 BCE, was a model for the United States government designed in 1776. It had a senate, representing leading families, and a popular chamber. The abbreviation SPQR (you can see on every manhole) stands for “the Senate and the People of Rome”

I CAN...BE INSPIRED BY ROME!

10 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT THE ROMANS

Wherever you live in the world, you are working to make it a better place. You are now together in Rome, where 2000 years ago, people tried for the first time to imagine a world with common rights and rules. When you look around, you can find a lot to inspire you: Romans were civic innovators, master engineers and global thinkers. They were also military conquerors, who built a vast empire by force. You could spend a lifetime learning about Rome. To get you started, here are 10 things you should know as you walk around the city: