Wearing his new, red silk suit acquired in Lyons on his journey south, a young British architect travelled in his own green and gold coach, hoping to make an impression as he passed through Italy. Like many other eighteenth-century artists he was making a journey that he felt was obligatory. It was both a real journey and a journey of ideas. As he travelled to Italy he looked at many works of art, as tourists still do. However, at a deeper level, those same works were shaping contemporary taste and ideas about art. Classical archaeology, in particular, was changing perceptions of the past.

The young man was the 26-year-old Robert Adam (1728–92), who knew how to project an image of himself that would inspire confidence in potential clients. Not all artists splashed out on fancy suits and coaches, but they did have other things in common while on their travels in Italy. They hoped to invest in their future success by gaining knowledge and skills, combined with a modest amount of social life that might lead to commissions. The aristocracy and gentry, on the other hand, treated their tour as a continuation of their education, combined with a whirl of social activity, and possibly a shopping spree for their art collections. Adam was one of the many thousands of the rich and the educated from all over Europe who travelled south to Italy during the eighteenth century: a journey which became known as the Grand Tour (2). British travellers were predominant, and have left numerous autobiographical accounts of Italy; fewer came from France and Germany, and smaller numbers still from such countries as Russia, Denmark and the newly independent United States. In terms of the number of artists on the move, however, the French and Germans do not seem to have been outnumbered by the British.

There were two main routes to Italy for those travelling from
Britain; from Paris through Switzerland (via Mont Cenis) to Turin, Milan, Florence, and then south; or via Lyons to Nice, and then by boat first to Genoa then Livorno (Leghorn) or occasionally further north to Lerici. Whichever route was chosen, however, travelling was tedious and expensive. Letters and journals are full of accounts of inns with poor accommodation and food, of carriages that were uncomfortable and got stuck in ruts or snow, and of seacrossings delayed for days or even weeks by bad weather. Tourists also found some of the scenery on the way depressing or, worse still, alarming – some travelled through the Alps with their coach blinds drawn down.

Whatever the rigours, however, the goal of Italy made the journey worthwhile. 'There is certainly no place in the world where a man may travel with greater pleasure and advantage than in Italy', run the opening words of a guidebook by Joseph Addison (1672–1719), the famous essayist and critic contributing to the Tatler and the Spectator. First published in 1705 and frequently reprinted throughout the century, Addison's Remarks on Several Parts of Italy found its way into the luggage of many British travellers. Its compact, pocket-sized format contained a wealth of basic facts combined with an erudite commentary, interspersed with numerous classical quotations. The era of the modern guidebook had arrived, with publishers across Europe supplying a rapidly expanding demand from both travellers and armchair readers.

On his first page, Addison summarized Italy's varied attractions. The landscape was 'more astonishing than anywhere else in Europe'. It was the 'great school' of music and painting. It contained 'all the noblest productions of statuary and architecture, both ancient and modern', and it 'abounds with cabinets of curiosities, and vast collections of all kinds of classical antiquities'. For those interested in politics, 'no other country in the world has such a variety of governments' (Italy was not united until late in the nineteenth century). And for those concerned with history, 'there is scarce any part of the nation that is not famous, nor so much as a mountain or river, that has not been the scene of some extraordinary action.' Italy could provide something to suit all tastes. In days long before tourist boards and travel agents' brochures, Addison did a good job in promoting Italy's longstanding attractions. By the mid-eighteenth century, Italy already had a booming tourist industry.

The 'advantage' of Italy – which Addison's readers would have taken for granted – meant the furthering of one's education, the acquisition of intellectual and cultural knowledge that was an integral part of the upbringing of the aristocracy, gentry, writers and artists. Travelling to Italy was not just for fun, although there was plenty of enjoyable social life available on arrival. According to some commentators on education, this Grand Tour should begin around the age of twenty. By then the traveller would have acquired a sound basis in classical history and literature – the foundation of European education in the eighteenth century. Many travellers were of course older, but all shared this classical background, and their imaginations were well prepared long before they set foot on Italian soil.

Most of the towns en route to Rome merited only brief stays to see the sites. Florence, however, attracted visitors for longer periods because of its greater artistic riches. These were greatly enhanced by the Duke of Tuscany's removal of his antique sculptures from the Villa Medici in Rome in 1770 to the Uffizi Gallery in Florence. The city then became the only one in Italy that could compete with Rome and Naples for classical statuary.

In the Uffizi Gallery, one of the greatest art collections in Europe, the focal point was the Tribuna. Specially built to display some of the most famous works in the collection, its crimson velvet walls were thickly hung with Old Master paintings. They provided a dazzling, if bewildering, backdrop for a group of major antique sculptures. In the best eighteenth-century visual record of the Tribuna (see 1), a large group of British tourists – or 'flock of travelling boys' as one contemporary wapishly described them – is shown examining and copying works in the room. Although the
artist has introduced some items not actually on display in the Tribuna at the time, he conveys the mixture of genuine appreciation and social bustle which characterized such gallery outings. The sculptures shown in the painting were frequently drawn and copied, especially the *Cupid and Psyche* (not actually in the room at the time) and, above all, the *Medici Venus* (3). For the eighteenth century, she represented the ultimate in female beauty in the ancient world. The painter and writer Jonathan Richardson (1665–1745), in his 1722 guidebook to Continental travels, recorded gazing at her for ten hours. Later, for Byron, she ‘fills / The air around with beauty; we inhale / The ambrosial aspect.’

Many antique and other variants of the *Medici Venus* existed, including one bought by a tourist for a vast sum while in Italy, and exported to his country house in England (see 37). She was also available as a small-scale figurine, both cast in bronze and manufactured throughout Europe by the ceramic industry.

Like any tourists, travellers on the Grand Tour looked at things famous or noteworthy. But the eighteenth-century traveller had a mental list of artistic preferences, influenced by the prevailing ideas in artistic theory. Classical remains had priority. From modern times, works of art of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries took precedence over earlier periods, which covered the wide expanse from the medieval period through to the early Renaissance of the fifteenth century. Works in these periods were apt to be dismissed as ‘Gothic’, which in the eighteenth century meant crude and disagreeable. This hierarchy of taste had been largely determined by writers and academies during the seventeenth century in Italy and France, and was firmly in position when the Neoclassical period began. Only at the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were there signs of any amendments (see Chapter 7). Within the accepted canon there was an ascending order of merit, represented in its crudest form in some books as a chart listing artists’ names, and in one example even awarding marks out of 20, under the headings of composition, design, colour and expression. Raphael comes top with a score of 17, 18, 12 and 18 respectively; Caravaggio, however, makes only
6, 8, 16 and an astonishing 9, and Dürrer 8, 10, 10, 8. Such charts almost reduce to the level of caricature a vast body of rarified discussion, but they nonetheless summarize a standard of taste that had become an accepted part of the eighteenth century's assessment of modern art.

Although Florence had much to offer tourists, Rome and Naples remained the ultimate destinations. Only the most intrepid proceeded further south by sailing on to Sicily. The Bay of Naples offered Vesuvius and the antiquities of Herculaneum and Pompeii, but in terms of ancient, and also modern, art Rome far excelled its southern rival. The French writer François-René de Chateaubriand (1768–1848) expressed succinctly, when on his Grand Tour in 1803–4, what so many other writers on Rome had noted about the dominant presence there of the historical past:

The man who occupies himself solely in the study of antiquities and the fine arts, or he who has no other ties in life, should live at Rome. The very stone that he treads on will speak to him; the dust blown by the wind around him will be decomposed particles of some great human being.

As another traveller noted, making the same point somewhat differently: 'It is impossible to feel ennui at Rome, though not a place of gaiety.' For that component of one's tour,
Naples was more dynamic and catered more for present-day tastes. These comments come from Lady Anna Miller, who was to take a leading part in the social and literary life of Bath on her return home in the later 1770s. For her, while Rome was admittedly 'the most agreeable retreat in the world for all those who love the fine arts, and have a real pleasure in the study of antiquity', the city 'yet rather inclines one to melancholy than cheerfulness'.

Once in Rome, some commentators recommended a stay of at least a year, and many tourists stayed longer. The Grand Tour was a leisurely pursuit that was not to be hurried. In order to take full advantage of what the city had to offer, the tourist was recommended to take a regular course with an antiquarian or guide. On average it would last about six weeks, occupying three hours a day, and consisted of instructed visits to all the worthwhile palaces, villas, churches and ancient sites (4) in and around Rome. Tourists were then advised to spend the succeeding months in revisiting the most interesting sites 'again and again' to 'reflect on them at more leisure', because otherwise 'those [objects] you see on one day [are] so apt to be effaced by, or confounded with, those you behold on another, that you must carry away a very faint and indistinct recollection of any'. This practical advice was offered in his Society and Manners in Italy (1781) by John Moore. He had first-hand experience as a tutor, having accompanied the young Duke of Hamilton on his Grand Tour in the previous decade (30). The study of the art and antiquities of Rome, indeed of other cities too, was not a matter to be undertaken lightly.

The study of the past may have been taken seriously, but this did not mean that ancient Rome had been carefully preserved as a series of tidy archaeological sites. Far from it. Ruins and marble fragments were put to new, up-to-date uses. The French painter Elisabeth-Louise Vigée-Lebrun (1755–1842) often visited the Colosseum at sunset, enjoying the play of light on the arcading and the beauty of the interior 'now filled with greenery, flowering shrubs and wild ivy', where small chapels had been erected for monks to follow the Stations of the Cross (5). Elsewhere in the city, washerwomen used ancient Roman baths for their laundry, ancient marble basins were used as outdoor pulpsits, sarcophagi made excellent water troughs, while cattle and sheep grazed in the Forum and sheltered under triumphal arches. Many artists recorded this living use of the past in drawings and paintings, a lively counterpart to the works of art displayed indoors. But even here, in galleries and museums, the contents were treated in a more relaxed way than would be tolerated today. Marble statues were frequently subjected to detailed measuring. Pictures that had been hung at the top of the fashionable many-tiered rows could be viewed from ladders or even scaffolding. A picnic lunch followed by siesta was even possible in the Sistine Chapel itself, provided the custodian was handsomely tipped. And when it came to souvenir hunting on archaeological sites, eighteenth-century tourists were no better behaved than today's. The German writer Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832) records walking through some ruins in Rome, partially covered by fields of artichokes, where he and his companion 'could not resist the temptation to fill our pockets with tablets of granite, porphyry, and marble which lay around in thousands, still bearing witness to the splendour of the walls which they once covered'.

Abraham Louis Ducros. The Interior of the Colosseum, c.1780. Watercolour and gouache, 76 x 112cm, 30 x 44 in. Hare Collection, Slouthead
Although visitors to Rome referred to it as a serious, sombre city, the picture could be exaggerated. There was always a great deal of music both ecclesiastical and secular. And like other cities it had a big annual festival, which lasted six weeks, culminating in a week when everyone wore masks. At this time of year there were also plenty of theatrical performances – normally forbidden. Even without the festival, though, there was always the colourful local life, in and around Rome, all faithfully recorded by the hordes of visiting artists (7).

The Vatican was at the heart of any tourist’s site-seeing in Rome, with the great church of St Peter’s, the Sistine Chapel and the many frescoed suites of rooms (some by Raphael), as well as the large collection of antique sculptures. The number of marbles grew rapidly during the eighteenth century, partly through purchases and partly through new excavations. This expansion necessitated the creation of new museums, firstly on the Capitol on the other side of the city, and later, from 1770 onwards, in the Vatican itself (6). Here rooms were altered and refurbished to create the still-surviving Museo Pio-Clementino, named after the two popes responsible for this initiative, Clement XIV and Pius VI. The Vatican collections, like other private collections in Rome, were well displayed, often in specially designed rooms and outdoor courtyards. They provided the richest concentration of classical antiquities in Europe, which visiting artists assiduously drew, taking home...
back with surprise', noted Lady Miller; 'Never did I see any sculpture come so near the life.' Both statues seemed to Viscount Palmerston to 'breath a spirit one could scarcely believe marble could convey'.

Both the Apollo and the Laocoön had been eulogized since their installation as part of the Vatican collections during the Renaissance. There was nothing new in the fact that the age of Neoclassicism continued to admire them. The novelty lay in the way they were described and the stress laid on particular characteristics. The second half of the eighteenth century looked at these two marbles and classical art as a whole, but especially sculpture, under the influence of the widely read publications of the German antiquarian scholar Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717–88).

In 1755 Winckelmann (12) published his first book on ancient art - before he had even arrived in Rome and seen the originals about which he was writing. *Reflections on the Imitation of the Painting and Sculpture of the Greeks* (Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke in der Malerei und Bildhauer-Kunst) contained ideas that he was to elaborate in later books after he
had settled in Rome, and its first sentence is like a clarion call: 'Good taste, which is gaining ever wider currency throughout the world, first began to develop under the skies of Greece.' He arrived in Rome later the same year, and in due course was appointed librarian to Cardinal Alessandro Albani (1692–1779), one of the foremost collectors of classical antiquities in Italy. An even more important appointment followed, as Prefect of Papal Antiquities. Influential connections combined with dedicated scholarship put Winckelmann in a unique position in the circle of scholars and connoisseurs concerned with classical antiquities in mid-eighteenth-century Rome, and within a decade of his arrival he became its leading classical scholar (and thus effectively the principal scholar in his field in Europe).

Apart from his youthful Reflections, his most significant work was the History of Ancient Art (Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums), published in 1764. With it he became the first writer on the subject to sort out a proper chronological development, intended to show 'the origin, progress, change and downfall of art.' Earlier writers had not concerned themselves overmuch with chronology, employing instead the vague word 'ancient' and using 'Greek' to cover Roman art as well. The assortment of images of Venus shown in an engraving (13) from one of the main early eighteenth-century antiquarian publications, is typical of this unhistorical approach. Winckelmann therefore laid the foundations of modern archaeological studies.

Parallel with this new accuracy in archaeological studies went a comparable development in the visual recording of ancient sites. Early eighteenth-century views of them were conceived as attractive pictures, inaccurate in their detailing, sometimes even rearranging monuments to produce a more marketable commodity. The Italian painter Giovanni Paolo Panini (1691/2–1765) was particularly adept at this kind of manipulation but could also give reasonably accurate impressions of Roman monuments, as in his view of the Forum (4). Both kinds of picture by him were immensely popular with travellers on the Grand Tour. But even this painting of the Forum lacks the precision of later views of it and other sites. Once information was more clearly delineated, it could have a stronger impact on collectors and artists alike, allowing archaeological evidence to be absorbed more easily into the mainstream of thought and art.
Winckelmann’s discussions of the Apollo Belvedere and the Laocoön exemplify his approach to classical art. His description of the Apollo goes much further than those of earlier eighteenth-century writers, who were content to describe it as ‘exquisitely great and awful [full of awe], as well as beautiful’, in the words of Jonathan Richardson’s guidebook. Winckelmann’s long discussion of the Apollo in his History contains two ideas that are central to the eighteenth-century view of ancient art. The first is the concept of an ideal art that is more perfect than nature, and the second is the beauty of the male nude. His discussion is also a subjective and sometimes passionate response to the statue, a new tone in European art criticism, anticipating the outpourings associated later with Romanticism.

Winckelmann stated categorically that of ‘all the works of antiquity which have escaped destruction, the statue of the Apollo Belvedere is the highest ideal of art. The artist has constructed this work entirely on the ideal: Winckelmann had discussed this concept earlier in his History, having already put the point neatly in his Reflections. There he had written of ‘something superior to nature’ that was to be found in Greek art, namely ‘ideal beauties, brain-born images’. This was not to deny that the ancients copied from nature, they most certainly did. But artists went beyond a ‘just resemblance’, aiming at ‘a more beauteous and more perfect nature’. Copying from just one head or body led to the naturalistic art associated with seventeenth-century Holland, showing everyday people and scenes, which Winckelmann despised. Instead, the Greek artist combined elements from a variety of observations to create a general beauty, an ideal image. Here Winckelmann was reiterating an academic position that had been current from the Renaissance onwards, and which derived ultimately from classical texts. While not originating the concept of ideal art, however, Winckelmann helped to give it a new lease of life in books that were to be widely read.

Returning to his description of the Apollo Belvedere, we find Winckelmann becoming increasingly rhapsodic. The idealized beauty of the god ‘clothes with the charms of youth the graceful manliness of ripened years, and plays with softness and tenderness about the proud shape of his limbs ... Neither blood-vessels nor sinews heat and stir his body, but a heavenly essence, diffusing itself like a gentle stream, which seems to fill the whole contour of the figure.’ He continues with a fulsome account of each part of the body, expressing a languorous enjoyment of each detail. ‘The soft hair,’ for example, ‘plays about the divine head as if agitated by a gentle breeze, like the slender waving tendrils of the noble vine.’ He concludes by confessing that ‘in the presence of this miracle of art I forget all else.’

Winckelmann has much to say about the beauty of the youthful male nude, linking it with the beneficence of the Greek climate. The beauty of their bodies, he argued, was far in excess of those of modern Europeans. In the past ‘a mild and clear sky influenced the childhood development of the Greeks’, and this when combined with all their physical exercises in the gymnasium and in games, shaped ‘their noble form’. It was these exercises that gave the bodies of the Greeks that ‘great and manly contour which the Greek masters imparted to their statues, with no vague outlines or superfluous accretions.’ The gymasia were the schools of art, because there the Greeks – artists and philosophers among them – could watch completely naked youths at their exercises, in a range of postures far more varied and genuine than could ever be reproduced by a model hired to pose in a modern academy. Such beauty, readily available in nature, formed the basis from which evolved the idealized images in the Vatican of the Apollo Belvedere, and of another famous male nude there, that of Antinous (14), the youthful lover of Emperor Hadrian. With these two works ‘all that nature, mind and art have been able to accomplish stands here before us.’

Aesthetic pleasure and scholarly erudition expressed by Winckelmann and his contemporaries in their response to ancient sculpture are only part of the significance of Greek and Roman art for the eighteenth century. Winckelmann had made a
passing reference to the use of nude models in modern academies or art schools, and just as the study of the nude had been of fundamental importance for the Greek and Roman artist, so it was again with the 'rebirth' of classical art at the time of the Renaissance. By the Neoclassical period, the study of the nude by a student, firstly using plaster casts of classical statuary and then graduating to the live model, was accepted without question as the basis of a European artist's training.

Nude models were available to students in academies and in the studios of artists who instructed pupils or assistants (16). Once established, artists could afford the expense of hiring their own. One of the attractions of Rome for many visiting artists were the regular facilities for drawing from the nude, principally available in two well-run academies (15). At all stages of an artist's career constant reference to the nude was regarded as of vital importance, especially in understanding properly the articulation of the human body. The nude was studied both in its own right, and also as one of the stages in the course of preparing a particular painting or sculpture. Studies for a composition often entailed posing the model as hero, saint or politician, perhaps drawing an entire scene consisting of many figures in this way. Only after such preparations would the artist then have recourse to clothing. Nudes in the form of plaster casts in academies and studios often included some form of Apollo; in the case of the studio in figure 16 there is a copy of an Apollo in the Uffizi (visible on the right), together with an Antinous in the background, and the head of the priest from the group of the Laocoön.

The Laocoön in the Belvedere of the Vatican was as famous as the Apollo there, but is a very different sculpture altogether. Let us return to that collection, and to Winckelmann's commentaries on this particular work. The group portrays Laocoön, a Trojan prince and priest, together with his two sons, who were killed on the beach by serpents that had risen from the sea. He had been trying to persuade the Trojans not to pull the fateful wooden horse within the walls of Troy, at which point divine intervention punished him. Laocoön's death, and that of his sons, is an episode full of horror, combining an unjust death with a painful means of exacting it. As a subject it is 'disagreeable'; to use the poet Shelley's adjective when describing the scene. The human anguish is very explicit in the lines of Virgil's Aeneid,
The main source for the story, where Laocoön 'lifts to the stars his horrifying shrieks': However, the sculptors of the marble group adopted a different approach, which Winckelmann preferred, avoiding exaggeration in both posture and expression. As he explained in his *History*:

Laocoön is an image of the most intense suffering. It manifests itself in his muscles, sinews and veins. The poison introduced into the blood by the deadly bite of the serpents, has caused the utmost excitement in the circulation; every part of the body seems as if straining with agony. By this means the artist brought into action all the natural motive powers, and at the same time displayed the wonders of his science and skill ... in the representation of this intense suffering is seen the determined spirit of a great man who struggles with necessity and strives to suppress all audible manifestations of pain.

The reasons lying behind that suppression had already been examined by Winckelmann in his *Reflections*. In a frequently quoted passage, he argued, in the context of the *Laocoön*, that 'the most eminent characteristic of Greek works is a noble simplicity and sedate grandeur in gesture and expression. As the bottom of the sea lies peaceful beneath a foaming surface, a great soul lies sedate beneath the strife of passions in Greek figures.' That soul, for Winckelmann, shone not only in the face of Laocoön 'with full lustre amidst the most violent sufferings', but also throughout the entire body. 'He pierces not heaven, like the Laocoön of Virgil; his mouth is rather opened to discharge an anxious overloaded groan; the struggling body and the supporting mind exert themselves with equal strength.' He continued: 'The more tranquillity reigns in a body, the fitter it is to draw the true character of the soul ... Wound up to the highest pitch of passion, she may force herself upon the duller eye; but the true sphere of the action is simplicity and calmness.'

'Noble simplicity' and 'sedate grandeur' were at the heart of Winckelmann's interpretation of ancient art, an interpretation shared both by other writers and by observers in the second half of the eighteenth century, and by practising artists. These two characteristics were central to Neoclassical art, most notably in painting, drawing and sculpture.

Perceptions of art were being changed not only by the theoretical and historical writings of such men as Winckelmann, but also by new archaeological finds, especially in the Bay of Naples. Discoveries from the excavations at Herculaneum and Pompeii made a journey south from Rome an essential part of the Grand Tour. As one tourist wrote ecstatically after a stay in Naples:

What a variety of attractions! A climate where heaven's breath smells sweet and wooingly; the most beautiful interchange of sea and land; wine, fruits, provisions, in their highest excellence; a vigorous and luxuriant nature, unparalleled in its productions and processes; all the wonders of volcanic power spent or in action; antiquities different from all antiquities on earth; a coast which was once the fairytale of poets, and the favourite retreat of great men.

Naples could satisfy whatever the inclinations and tastes of a tourist. As the third largest city in Europe in the eighteenth century, only exceeded by London and Paris, Naples was well endowed with all the necessary facilities. The commodious accommodation available is nicely portrayed in a genre scene in which a British aristocrat entertains friends, invited to hear the young Mozart perform (17). The city coped with all requirements; souvenirs, including volcanic fragments, could be bought, and guides hired to take tourists around the city, as well as up the arduous climb to the crater of Vesuvius. Just to wander round the streets, observing the colourful local lifestyle, provided much entertainment for any tourist or artist (18).

With luck one's accommodation in Naples embraced a view of Vesuvius, so that, as one traveller noted, 'I never go to bed without watching and bidding it adieu from my window.' The volcano has been dormant since 1944, so we are nowadays denied the excitement aroused whenever Vesuvius was active. If showing signs of erupting in the eighteenth century, which it often did, hundreds of tourists would leave Rome and flock to Naples to watch the spec-
tacle. Tourists, painters and scientists were all enthralled by Vesuvius (20), none more so in the eighteenth century than Sir William Hamilton (1730–1803), the British diplomatic representative at the Neapolitan court (19). A well-known collector of antiquities (22) and a major figure in the life of the city, Hamilton was also a scientist. He was particularly interested in geology, publishing between 1776 and 1779 an important study devoted mainly to Vesuvius, entitled *Campi Phlegraei. Observations on* the Volcanoes of the Two Sicilies*.* (the Latin name is that given, to this day, to the area west of Vesuvius). Beautifully illustrated with hand-coloured plates, these volumes provided a detailed, first-hand record of a series of eruptions of Vesuvius, including one of the greatest in the century in 1779. Hamilton's text is a typical product of the empirical, enquiring mind of the eighteenth century.

The most notorious of the eruptions of Vesuvius had taken place in 79 AD, totally engulfing the two prosperous towns of Herculaneum and Pompeii. They remained buried until the sites were rediscovered in the early eighteenth century, and systematically excavated from 1738 and 1748 respectively, although serious excavations at Pompeii did not get under way until 1763 (24). Gradually as the rich variety of artefacts was uncovered from the ruins, the contemporary perception of the ancient world was transformed. The excavations produced far more material evidence about the Roman way of life than had ever been known before. The cumulative effect of these archaeological finds (together with new discoveries around Rome) was both to create a heightened awareness of classical antiquity and to stimulate a classical revival in the arts.

The finds from Herculaneum were displayed in a museum near the site, usually the first place visited by tourists after their arrival in Naples. The impact was stunning, often giving visitors the feeling that the ancients were better at absolutely everything than the moderns, even eating. A Roman kitchen had been re-created,
complete with all its utensils, leading one visitor to lament that 'it seems indisputable that the ancients employed more refinements in their entertainments than the moderns and must have served up a much greater variety of dishes than we do.' The exhibits ranged from equipment, utensils and furniture to bronze sculptures and figurines, and wall-paintings.

Because of the uniqueness of the sites, illustrated publications were forbidden, a ban which included sketching on the spot. The only engravings of the Herculaneum finds available in the mid-eighteenth century were those in the lavish folio volumes published under royal patronage by the Accademia Ercolanese from 1755 onwards (21). These were not put on sale, but were given away as diplomatic presents; some tourists would have had access to them at home before leaving on their tour, but most would not have seen them. The impact of the museum contents near the Herculaneum site was therefore all the more intense. The restriction on drawing was supervised by guards, and although surreptitious drawings were made - official exceptions were possible only if the artist had an influential patron or was working for the royal court. This latter reason allowed the German painter Philipp Hackert (1737–1807) to produce some of the rare eighteenth-century pictures of the site at Pompeii (24), as he had been officially appointed Painter to the King. As the century
progressed, however, pirating of the official publications undermined the prohibitions, and the disruptions resulting from the French invasion of Italy at the end of the century brought the restrictions to an end.

Paestum, once an ancient Greek colony, with its three surviving temples, was among the sites visited by the more enterprising tourists based in Naples. Although the journey to the gulf of Salerno was ‘an exhausting one’, as Vigée-Lebrun had been forewarned, she and others found the visit rewarding, for the temples are among the best-preserved examples of Greek architecture outside Greece itself. The largest temple (23), believed wrongly in the eighteenth century to be dedicated to Neptune (or Poseidon), was acknowledged to be ‘one of the most magnificent monuments of antiquity’, as a French antiquarian put it. Thick vegetation and malarial swamps had prevented access to the site, until cleared in the middle of the century. Visitors to Paestum were struck by the grandeur and the isolation of the place, while not necessarily liking the architecture. Eighteenth-century taste was

not yet receptive to the austerities of the Doric style, finding it ‘inelegant’ or, in the words of one budding Neoclassical architect, ‘rude’ (John Soane was subsequently to change his mind). Viscount Palmerston left a vivid record of visiting Paestum on his Grand Tour in 1764: approaching the ruins he was ‘more struck with them than anything I ever saw except the first view of Rome’. He particularly enjoyed the absence of modern buildings, in contrast to their all too visible presence on other sites – where ‘half an ugly Gothic church is tacked to half an old temple’. For Palmerston and fellow tourists of comparable sensibility, the forsaken and silent temples evoked the lost grandeur of a great civilization – a response that is an integral component of the pleasure of ruins.

Artists, and in particular architects, had an additional reason for visiting Paestum. They had an opportunity to study at first-hand the earliest form of classical architecture. Paestum may have involved an uncomfortable journey, but to go on to Sicily or even Greece itself to see other examples would have been a great deal more inconvenient. As the author of the first book to publish accurate engravings of the Paestum temples explained to his readers, he wanted to show fully ‘the state of Grecian architecture in its infancy, and from thence we may trace the steps of its progressive
improvements, to that elegance, grandeur and magnificence, which have been the admiration of the succeeding ages' (Thomas Major, 1768). In other words, for the mid-eighteenth-century generation, the Greek Doric was a step on the road to progress, not necessarily a stage to which one should return. The Greek Revival, a fully-fledged re-creation of such architecture, was several decades away yet.

The sight of more Greek temples rewarded tourists if they sailed from Naples to Palermo, the overland route being arduous, malaria-infested and bandit-ridden. Once in Sicily, the traveller had to contend with the plague and bandits he had avoided on the mainland, together with inadequate roads and accommodation, unless he was fortunate enough to have letters of introduction to a resident. Wealthy tourists sometimes took artists with them, so that they could return with their own, personally commissioned record, especially valuable for such places as Sicily, where few engravings had been published. As a wealthy young man at the age of seventeen, on the first of two visits to Italy, Richard Payne Knight (1751–1824) hired in Naples the services of the artist Philipp Hackert to accompany him to Sicily. A watercolour of the Doric temple at Segesta (25), standing isolated amidst the mountains, is one in the series that resulted from that trip. Knight later became an important collector of classical art and an influential writer, and we shall encounter him again at the time of the controversy over the British government's purchase of the Elgin Marbles.

Apart from Paestum and Sicily, the only other direct contact with Greek art that was possible on Italian soil was in a different medium altogether, namely ceramics. Greek vases, mainly of the fifth and fourth centuries BC (wrongly identified in the eighteenth century as 'Etruscan' because of their discovery in Etruscan tombs), were avidly collected. A few appear on the background shelves of the Neapolitan interior reproduced in figure 17. The most important collection of Greek vases, however, was that formed by Sir William Hamilton (22), and no stay in Naples was complete without a visit to view this.

Hamilton formed two collections, both of which were published. The first appeared between 1766 and 1767 in volumes with hand-coloured plates, a very handsome example of book production. Unfortunately Hamilton got into financial difficulties because of escalating publication costs, and he had to sell the collection. The still young British Museum, which had opened to the public in 1759, was to benefit by acquiring in one go a major addition to its antiquities. As so often happens when a collector empties his shelves or walls, Hamilton started to collect again. The second collection was published between 1791 and 1795, but this time more economically, with the plates no longer coloured (see 172). Hamilton was passionate about his vases, claiming in his preface to the later collection: 'There are no monuments of antiquity that should excite the attention of modern artists more than the slight drawings on the most excellent of these vases; they may from them form a just idea of the spirit of the ancient Greek artists.'
Hamilton's collections of Neoclassical art, aided by one of Winckelman's early biographers, have been thought to profoundly influence the development of Neoclassical art. Aided by the painted decoration on Greek vases, which he says little about, he was a source of ancient art for Winckelmann, who also praised the qualities of ancient art in his History of Art. Winckelmann believed that modern artists could only learn precision in contour from the Greeks. He also praised the clarity and ideal beauty of the figures of the Greeks. Even when sculpted figures were combined with more obvious linearity on Greek vases, Winckelmann made sure that the contour preserved the beauty of the body. He also emphasized the stress on contour and line, as well as the marked two-dimensional interpretation of nature, that characterize much Neoclassical art.

Among the many sites to be visited around the Bay of Naples, one had purely personal connotations and was regarded as a place of pilgrimage. This was Virgil's tomb. Of all the principal classical writers whose works were familiar to any eighteenth-century traveler, only Virgil had a tomb which could be visited outside Naples. The precise location of the poet's tomb, but by the eighteenth century it was firmly identified with this particular ancient Roman
The work of Swift and Hogarth engendered a two-year stay in

were not of major importance.

way, and above all the landscape that had been so familiar to

companion with his vision of a golden age in Italy, and a

thoughtful and his pastoral poems, the Eclogues and the Georgics,

(see Chapter 4). Virgil’s deep love of the countryside evident

the application of the garden layout at Woburn in England,

in another

in a modern glasshouse at Wilmshurst, just outside Kassel in

Nordic peoples might include the re-creation of Virgil’s Tomb

on the Grand Tour is hardly surprising.

of non-existent dedicated guidebooks that were available in Italy was

not geared to tourist industrial facilities for travel and accom-

not visit unless one is engaged in educational or research

the picturesque and well-informed scenery. This most

their ideal, the classical world further shielded remained inaccessible.

the perfect, the classical world further shielded remained inaccessible.

many ideas for history paintings, landscape gardens in the

formed within the limits of antique times. Artists found in his works

and his imprint on the popular art of Virgil’s so-called romantics with the traveler

is of the classical Roman tradition, picturesque country found

to the influence of Homer’s Iliad and Odyssey, was at the heart of

the poet himself. The reader is in his concern with the greatness of

be without study. Readers of this book were doubtless unthrottled

but so strongly was the tradition that Robert W. Miiller and Andrew

be written By Virgil himself. Is it recorded that this was indeed his
of Greek civilization in the fifth and fourth centuries BC. Stendhal and
along with the contributions of other artists in the Great Period,
called many exquisite productions of art. It is the work of Philonis,
their first volume dedicated to the influence of aesthetic and
their second volume dedicated to the influence of aesthetic and
evaluation of two great aesthetic influences and that guidance
on mere aesthetic principles, it involved major differences in the
eighteenth century. The Greek focus on aesthetics was
"preface". This was

The Grand Tour in reality of imagination went no further than
a kind of travel they admired and could use
by fortune or fortune or fortune from the Roman

Of the only few sent from the Roman

next chapter

British Press (1770-79) and others will be discussed in the
By those who traveled and went on a journey to
excited in a great story. The change in the Great Reformation
and Reformation were given few opportunities to see their great
shore from the Poet’s books, as if to add to the skill of the
person of the Poet’s books, as if to add to the skill of the
Islands, returning home in 1792. The publication of their findings
and all the Athenians are in motion! The reader accompanies Anarcharsis when he dines out with friends, and observes farmers in the vineyards and athletes in the gymnasium. Music, food, books, clothing, all are conjured up as if from first-hand observation. He meets Plato and Aristotle; the mathematician Euclid takes him round his library; he watches the sculptor Praxiteles erect a statue. The many footnotes attest to the abbé’s thorough scholarship, condensed from myriad antiquarian publications into an enjoyable work of fiction. On one occasion, Anarcharsis visits Plato’s academy (or ‘lyceum’), located near Athens in a garden surrounded by walls, adorned with delightful covered walks, and embellished by waters which flow under the shade of the plane and various other kinds of trees:

At the entrance is the altar of Love, and the statue of that god, and within, the altars of several other deities. Not far from hence Plato has fixed his residence, near a small temple, which he has dedicated to the Muses, and on a piece of ground belonging to himself. He comes every day to the academy, where we found him in the midst of his disciples, and I instantly felt myself inspired with that respect which everyone must feel in his presence. Though about sixty-eight years old, he still retained a fresh and animated complexion. Nature had bestowed on him a robust body ... He received me with much simplicity and politeness.

The artist Elisabeth-Louise Vigée-Lebrun found The Travels of Anarcharsis so appealing that in her Paris home she re-created for her friends a Greek dinner described in the book. She instructed her cook to prepare a meal according to recipes in the book, she borrowed ancient Greek vases from a neighbour, and she and all her friends dressed in ancient Greek costume. One of Vigée-Lebrun’s friends played a guitar which had been transformed for the occasion into a golden lyre, accompanying everyone as they sang a chorus from one of the classically inspired operas by the contemporary composer Gluck. On her subsequent travels around Europe, Vigée-Lebrun found that the fame of her dinner had preceded her.

Like all travellers, tourists returned with souvenirs. Rome was usually where they had their portraits painted. Artists who were themselves travelling on the Grand Tour often earned money by acting as guides, dealers or portraitists, but some of the best of the Grand Tour portraits were executed by resident Italians, most notably Pompeo Batoni (1708–87). From the 1750s to 1780s a stream of Europe’s aristocracy and gentry passed through his studio, taking home with them – mostly to Britain – a fine memento of their Grand Tour. Batoni painted many bust-lengths to suit the more economical purses of his sitters, but he came into his own with his full-lengths. For these he evolved a standard composition, showing his client standing in a nonchalant pose, with legs elegantly crossed and one arm leaning against some piece of antique sculpture. In the background there are usually one or two more sculptures, perhaps even a Roman ruin. Batoni’s painting of the Duke of Hamilton at the age of nineteen is a typical example (30). Hamilton was on his Grand Tour with John Moore as his tutor, and the tour, which lasted just over four years, was nearing its end. After arriving in Rome, Hamilton wasted little time before sitting to Batoni, arranging to pay him not all at once...
'but as he proceeds, and therefore there is reason to believe he will not delay so very much as is his custom.' This canny tactic seems to have worked, since the portrait was ready within six months. Moore had seen to it that his young pupil viewed the works of antiquity thoroughly, and this classical awareness is well represented in the portrait. The duke is leaning against a pedestal supporting a statue of a seated Roma. The carved relief of a weeping woman symbolizes one of the Roman provinces, was much admired in the eighteenth century, and copied in a variety of materials including Wedgwood’s ceramic reliefs. In the background is one of the most frequently visited sites near Rome, the Temple of the Sibyl at Tivoli. Hamilton also commissioned while in Rome, from the British artist Gavin Hamilton (1723–98), a large Neoclassical canvas inspired by Homer’s Iliad, illustrating the scene when Hector bids farewell to his wife Andromache, before going off to fight and meet his heroic end (see Chapter 3).

The portrait of the Duke of Hamilton epitomizes the balance between pleasurable relaxation and intellectual stimulus that was so essential to the Grand Tour, brilliantly captured by one of the great portraitists working in the Neoclassical period. Batoni died two years before the outbreak of the French Revolution, so he did not live to see the disruption caused to the Grand Tour, resulting from war and the invasion of Italy by the French. The tourists left, returning in large numbers only after the cessation of the Napoleonic War.

Among the foreign artists who had to flee from Italy was the German painter Johann Heinrich Wilhelm Tischbein (1751–1829), who left Naples in 1799 when it fell to the French. The most famous tourist from his native Germany visiting Italy during his stay was Goethe (1786–8), whose European reputation had already been established by his romantic, tragic novel Sorrows of Young Werther. Tischbein introduced him to fellow Germans in Rome and acted as the writer’s companion and guide. Goethe’s journal makes frequent references to their joint activities, but also shows that he wanted to keep a low profile, adopting countless ruses to
avoid social invitations. He preferred to spend his time sightseeing, writing and drawing (32).

Tischbein originated the idea for the portrait that was to become one of the most famous of all Grand Tour images, Goethe in the Roman Campagna (31). The writer had noticed that the painter was often 'attentively regarding me', and when Tischbein suggested the portrait it was clear that he had already decided how Goethe was to be posed. He would be shown wearing a white cloak, seated on a fallen obelisk, against a background of the landscape to the south of Rome filled with antique remains, the Roman Campagna. The artist alludes to Goethe's fascination with the historical past by including references to the three ancient civilizations in which Goethe and his contemporaries were so absorbed - Egypt, Greece and Rome.

The first is represented by the broken obelisk, a monumental form adopted by the Romans from Egypt. While in Rome Goethe had been enthralled by the traces of Egyptian civilization there: 'I have taken up Egyptian things again', he wrote, and it is perhaps partly because of its Egyptian origins that he included the Pyramid of Caius Cestius, one of Rome's most famous ancient monuments, among his Italian drawings. Greece is represented by the fragment of a relief, carved in a style which would have been loosely identified as 'Greek'. Its subject matter is also Greek, and relates directly to Goethe's own writing at the time. The scene is from the story of Iphigenia: she has become a priestess of the goddess Artemis on Aulis, and is suddenly confronted by her brother and his friend, who have come to steal the goddess's image. As strangers they must be sacrificed, having already been taken prisoner, but Iphigenia arranges their escape. The story had fascinated Goethe for many years, and he finally completed his own version of Iphigenia while in Rome. The third civilization in the portrait, Rome itself, is represented by the capital, but above all by the background which is dominated by the imposing circular Tomb of Caecilia Metella. Tischbein thus epitomized the ideas and interests of one of the greatest writers in Europe at a particular stage in his development, when classical antiquity meant so much to him.

Acquisitions of contemporary art while on the Grand Tour were usually commissioned portraits, and occasionally also landscapes, subject-paintings (such as Hamilton's Iliad piece just mentioned) and modern sculpture. Because of the many potential clients thronging Italy, especially Rome, artists often displayed some of their work permanently in their studios for visitors to view. The greatest Italian Neoclassical sculptor, Antonio Canova (1757-1822), kept such a studio, as did some of the foreigners.

One of the most ambitious and successful of these foreign studios was that maintained in Rome by the Danish sculptor, Bertel Thorvaldsen (1768/70-1844), who remained in the city for forty years. A painting of his studio records a visit by the pope in 1826 (33), and gives a good indication of the variety of work that might be on display at any one time. In this case, one can see classically inspired figures and reliefs, portrait busts, and tombs and religious figures for churches.

Other purchases made on the Grand Tour included Old Master paintings, prints, classical statuary and gems, in the form of cameos, many of which were copies, as well as being available as plaster casts. These gems were among the most easily transportable souvenirs, for display in cabinets or mounted as jewellery. A carved cameo, for example, after the famous statue of Hercules, which was in the Farnese palace in Rome until moved to Naples in the 1780s, was mounted as a gentleman's ring in the late eighteenth century (34), a typical re-use of such small-scale pieces.

Equally transportable and easily affordable were prints, and in
this field one artist towered over all others in Rome, the great Piranesi. As one contemporary notes of Piranesi's prints: 'They are esteemed the best here, and we have made an ample collection of the most valuable of them.' In a range of etchings that go beyond mere topography, Piranesi captured imaginatively the grandeur of the past. The glorious architectural achievements of a Roman Empire long since fallen into decay, half buried and overgrown, were presented by Piranesi with a unique boldness (35). Some of his etchings provided a far more extensive coverage of ancient Roman buildings than had ever been published before, based on his detailed knowledge of the sites. Not satisfied with just one view, he etched several of both the exterior and interior, as well as cross-sections, plans, and even diagrammatic analyses of structures (36). Such etchings provided valuable information for architects and archaeologists, and complemented his more obviously picturesque views, which satisfied most tourists' desire for souvenirs. Prints could be bought either individually or as complete volumes. Piranesi's œuvre encompassed both ancient and modern subjects, and amounted to over a thousand prints. His impact on the contemporary vision of Italy, especially its ancient classical past, was so considerable that for some tourists it was
Hadrian's Villa, which were then combined with new pieces fashioned to Piranesi's own design.

This kind of imaginative restoration was not untypical of the eighteenth century. Contemporary taste would not accept broken sculptural fragments in their own right, as we do today. If the limbs or head were missing from a marble, then they had to be supplied. Present-day museum displays have largely removed these additions, but in eighteenth-century Rome, restorers' studios were kept busy, because, as one dealer put it, collectors 'have no value for statues without heads' and would not even pay a guinea 'for the finest torso ever discovered'.

In the sculpture gallery at Newby Hall (37), the Venus in the left-hand niche is the most notorious example of such restoration, going even further than usual. While on his Grand Tour, the gentleman landowner William Weddell put together a large collection of marbles for his country house, including a very expensive version of the Medici Venus bought in 1765. He was unaware that the body had been found on one site and the head elsewhere, and that the head had been recarved to remove its original veil. This newly concocted Venus was created in the studio of Rome's leading restorer, Bartolomeo Cavaceppi (39), who thus had on his hands a much more marketable product than the original incomplete parts. However, Weddell was delighted with his new acquisitions, and commissioned Robert Adam to extend his country house to include a new sculpture gallery. Adam also designed the pedestals and laid out the collection, which is still intact today, a rare surviving example of Neoclassical Grand Tour taste.