



We were in Pompeii last year and marveled about how the care and excavation by the Italian government had returned this ancient Roman city back to almost as it was when the volcano struck. The streets, houses, baths, taverns and everything else were still standing. Now one of the most interesting is no more.

The Schola Armaturarum, school and barracks for the gladiators was well worth the visit. The frescoes on the walls clearly showed how the guys were trained to fight their battles in the arenas, and also portrayed their various battle unit symbols. It reminded visiting ex-GIs of basic training or Navy/Marine boot camp. It wasn't much different than today's service schools, except maybe that our guys are trained to fight to live, while ancient gladiators were mostly destined to die in the arena.

If your travels take you to Naples, Italy, be sure to sign up for spending at least a couple of hours in Pompeii. You never know when the rest of the town will collapse if old Mount Vesuvius gets angry again.