Herculaneum

It is estimated that 5,000 people lived in Herculaneum prior to Vesuvius' eruption: 500 aged 10-15, 250 aged 15-20, and 600 people aged 20-25. Four women were found to have been pregnant, and all were between 18-21 years old.

There have been many archeological finds in Herculaneum, including:

- Villa of the Papyri.
- 2,000 scrolls inside the Villa of Papyri, destroyed yet preserved by the eruption. They have to be unwound carefully, and read using multispectral imaging as they are so burnt.
- The House of Aristides, named due to a statue found in front of the house, which was wrongly identified as the Greek polititian Aristides.
- The House of Argus, named because of a fresco of Argus and Io found in a reception room.
- College of the Augustales.

Herculaneum lay West of Mount Vesuvius, so when Vesuvius started to spew ash, the prevailing winds were in a Souteasterly direction meaning only a little ash fell on Herculaneum, but it was enough to make many of the citizens flee. That night, a column of hot volcanic ash from Vesuvius had risen 50km into the air and then collapsed on the flank of the volcano. The first pyroclastic surge, a mixture of ash, hot gases and rock fragments, rushed through Herculaneum towards the beach where all who had been waiting to escape were killed from the intense heat. This surge was one of six which billowed through the city, burying the buildings and preserving the majority of the area. The buildings were covered and filled so quickly, there was no time for the buildings to collapse; meaning Herculaneum is preserved much better than Pompeii.

It was originally thought that all the citizens had managed to escape as there only a few skeletons were found. It was only in 1981 when archaeologists found hundreds of skeletons clumped together on the beach and in the boat house where they had taken refuge.