Pompeii thieves say relics are cursed



The ancient city of Pompeii near Naples, Italy, receives hundreds of thousands of tourists every year. It is one of Italy's top tourist destinations. Most tourists leave the 2,000-year-old site with happy memories, photos and souvenirs. However, some visitors take more. They take historic relics from the city – things like small statues, stones or mosaic tiles. However, many of these people are now regretting their actions. They say the relics are cursed and have filled their lives with bad luck since bringing them home. A senior official at Pompeii said he has had hundreds of packages from across the world from people returning what they had taken. Many people apologised and wrote stories about their bad luck.

The senior official, Massimo Osanna, told reporters about some of the stories he had received. One man from Latin America explained that his life was full of traumas after he got home from Italy with a small tile he had put in his pocket. A person from Spain returned five packages containing stolen items, including a bronze statue that went missing in 1987. The writer complained that the statue had put, "a curse on his entire family". Mr Osanna is thinking about setting up an exhibition of all the letters he has received. He explained that the letters might be more interesting than the relics. He said: "It's not that the stolen pieces are highly interesting or valuable. It's more the letters."

Sources: *Telegraph / the Local.it / Wikipedia.org*

Writing

Nobody should be allowed into ancient cities. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

ancient / tourists / destinations / memories / souvenirs / historic relics / packages / stories / trauma / stolen / statue / complained / exhibition / interesting / valuable

True / False

a) The article says Pompeii receives millions of visitors a year. T / F

b) Pompeii is over 3,000 years old. T / F

c) People had bad luck after stealing things from Pompeii. T / F

d) People returned relics along with letters of apology. T / F

e) A Latin American man said he got lots of good luck from Pompeii relics. T / F

f) A Spanish man complained about being cursed by a golden statue. T / F

g) A Pompeii official wants to set up an exhibition of the letters. T / F

h) The official said the letters are more interesting than the relics. T / F

Synonym Match

1.	ancient	a.	said sorry
2	tourists	b.	sent back
3.	relics	c.	top
4.	senior	d.	sightseers
5.	apologised	e.	upsets
6.	received	f.	whole
7.	traumas	g.	very old
8.	returned	h.	precious
9.	entire	i.	got
10.	valuable	j.	objects

Discussion 1

a) What do you know about Pompeii?

b) What famous old places have you visited?

c) How important are archaeological sites?

d) What do you think about what you read?

e) What are your favourite tourist destinations?

f) What do you think of people taking things from Pompeii?

g) Do you believe in things like good and bad luck?

h) What things have you done that you later regretted?

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Phrase Match

1.	The ancient	a.	official
2	hundreds of thousands	b.	tourist destinations
3.	one of Italy's top	c.	of all the letters
4.	They say the relics	d.	valuable
5.	A senior	e.	are cursed
6.	a bronze	f.	city of Pompeii
7.	put a curse	g.	than the relics
8.	setting up an exhibition	h.	statue
9.	more interesting	i.	of tourists
10.	highly interesting or	j.	on his entire family

Discussion 2

a) Are you generally a lucky or unlucky person?

b) Should the people who stole things from Pompeii be arrested?

c) What do you think of the idea of an exhibition of the letters?

d) When was the last time you wrote a letter of apology?

e) What advice do you have for people who visit Pompeii?

f) Do you think the letters or the relics would be more interesting?

g) What questions would you like to ask the official at Pompeii?

Spelling

1. The tnnaeic city of Pompeii
2. one of Italy's top tourist oteantisdnsi
3. happy memories, photos and nsoersuvi
4. small eustsat, stones or mosaic tiles
5. A senior aiffcloi at Pompeii
6. hundreds of kapsgaec
7. his life was full of aatsmru
8. The writer ciomlnpead that...
9. his einert family
10. setting up an boiitxnehi
11. the stolen seicpe
12. highly interesting or lavauelb

Speaking – Cities

Rank these with your partner. Put the best cities for tourists at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- Naples
- London
- Sydney
- Rio
- New York
- Tokyo
- Cairo
- Bangkok

LIVEWORKSHEETS