



PRESS RELEASE

CREMONINI GROUP: effigies of the Emperors Constantine, Valentinianus II and Theodosius come to light amongst the 800 coins from antique Rome discovered in the archaeological excavations of the “Spazio Cremonini al Trevi”.

The “coin casket” will be shown to the public in the *antiquarium* of the museum area of the “Città dell’Acqua”

The “Spazio Cremonini al Trevi” in Rome, dedicated to art, culture and entertainment, is enriched by the new archaeological finds. This is a nucleus of over 800 coins that can be dated between the IV and V century A.D., a true “coin casket”, discovered during the excavations of the *Vicus Caprarius* area, a few metres from the Trevi Fountain.

The coins have been carefully restored over the last few months and will be placed in the *antiquarium* organised within the archaeological area called “La città dell’Acqua”.

The restoration was carried out by Alessandra Barone and Barbara Gregni of the Archaeological Restoration Cooperative of Rome, under the guidance of Mr. Fiorenzo Catalli, Archaeological Director of the Rome Archaeology Superintendence.

The coin casket, containing over 800 pieces (so-called “nummi” made of base metal) and plausibly attributable to the servants of a *domus* of the IV century A.D., comes from the deepest archaeological strata: of particular interest, in addition to the many types of coins that can be dated to different periods between the IV and V century A.D., is the remains of cloth still adhering to some pieces, possibly referable to the original container of the coins, a bag or similar.

The *Vicus Caprarius* “casket” is an extraordinary testimony to one of the more difficult periods in the history of the city of Rome. In fact, in the final phase of the Roman Empire the economy suffered from a persistent inflationary phenomenon, with the inevitable increasing production of money. The gravity of the situation had already forced the Emperors Aurelian, in 274 A.D., Diocletian, in 294 A.D., and Constantine, in 324 A.D., to attempt reforms of the monetary system with the sole result of reinforcing the only stable money, gold, to the detriment of base metal money in bronze, copper and silver alloy.

Diocletian’s Prices Edict, which attempted an authoritarian restriction on the escalation of goods and services prices, offers us a desolating cross-section of the Roman economy at the end of the III century A.D., squeezed between a progressive contraction in production capacity, the growing weight of military expenditure for the protection of Roman territories, including tributes payable to the “cushion” states to guarantee their neutrality, and management of power in a state of deep crisis due to the weakness of the political programme.

The effigies of Constantine and some of his children, Valentinianus II and Theodosius, which reappear on the coins from the “casket” thanks to their restoration, take us on a fascinating journey into the history of that period: however, it is an unofficial history, viewed from the perspective of the common people who used these coins and we can imagine them committed to tiresome shopping for survival in the small markets around the *Vicus Caprarius*.



The works between 1999 and 2002 for the renovation of the old Trevi Cinema have supplied an occasion for a careful archaeological investigation of the subsoil of the building.

The excavation, which extends up to a depth of 9 metres from ground level, has involved an area of about 400 square metres and brought to light a large building that originally extended over a surface of approximately 2000 square metres facing onto the *Vicus Caprarius*, the antique traces of which are reflected by today's Via di San Vincenzo. The exploration work took over three years at an overall cost, borne by the Cremonini Group, of about 2.5 million euros including the restoration and layout of the archaeological site, ensuring full usability with the laying-out of a route for visits, and a small antiquarian where the finds are displayed.

This museum complex, which in a little over 2 years has had over 30,000 visitors, is now enhanced by a further attraction, added to which are the numerous initiatives promoted by the Cremonini Group for the purpose of promoting art, culture and entertainment as components of a collection that integrate with modern food culture.

The "Spazio Cremonini" at the Trevi has, from 2002 to date, hosted important events such as the "virtual Archaeology" project with the filming of multi-media archaeology dedicated to the history of Rome at the "A. Sordi" cinema, art and photography exhibitions of contemporary artists, the cycle of "In the footprints of Caravaggio" conferences, guided visits of the archaeological area coupled with the sampling typical products and the "Voci d'Acqua" Music Festival.

Cremonini, with over 7,200 employees, is one of the most important food groups in Europe and operates in three business sectors: production, distribution and catering.

The Group, which had total revenues of 2,128.9 million euros in 2005, is the absolute leader in Italy in the production of beef and meat-based transformed products (**Montana**) and the marketing and distribution of food products (**MARR**) to the food service sector. It also has a significant presence in the catering sector and, in particular, the leadership in Italy in on-board train and railway station catering (**Chef Express**). Finally the Group is in 2nd place in the Italian motorway catering market (**Moto**).

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