

surveyors and architects laid out the new colony as a rectangular grid surrounded by a circuit of walls about 3,000 yards around, enclosing an area of about 110 acres. The space within the walls was divided by two principal streets, the *cardo* and the *decumanus*, running respectively north-south and east-west, which led from the four city gates to meet at right angles at the forum near the center of the town. (The exact site of the forum is uncertain, but it was probably in the area occupied today by the city hall: striking evidence of the continuity of urban life). Construction was solid and intended to last. The Roman walls have vanished – although some sections were still protecting the city in the early seventeenth century – but one of the original gates, the Porta Palatina, still stands on what was once the northern perimeter of the Roman city, its massive brick and stone towers, much restored, rising above the surrounding buildings. The eastern gate (Porta Pretoria) still exists too, although it is no longer visible. In the early fifteenth century it was incorporated into a new fortress, known formerly as the Castello, today as Palazzo Madama, which was constructed by adding two more towers to the towers of the Roman gate to form a roughly square urban fortress. The conical tops of the Roman towers can still be seen peeping above the roofline of Palazzo Madama today. Inside the walls, the secondary streets divided the urban space into roughly equal-sized residential blocks or *insulae*. The streets were provided with underground sewers for drainage and were paved in the traditional Roman way with carefully-fitted slabs of stone, which can still be seen, a few feet below the surface, when the streets are excavated for repairs. The Praetorium, the residence of the local governor, stood in the northeast corner of the town's rectangle of walls, some distance from the forum. The present-day royal palace (Palazzo Reale) occupies more or less the same site – a further indication of continuity in the city's plan. Finally the new town was endowed with the customary amenities of urban civilization: an aqueduct to provide a regular water-supply, public baths, temples, and a theater, whose ruins can still be seen today next to the royal palace.

The importance of the Roman foundation cannot be overstressed, for it set its stamp on the city for all time. The rectilinear ground-plan laid out by the Roman surveyors would remain the basis of Turin's urban plan, the starting-point for all later development, almost to the present day. The passage of two millennia has effaced the Roman grid in some places and softened its sharp outline in others, but it can still be discerned in the rectilinear layout of the historic center of the city. For a long time Turin did not outgrow its Roman walls, but when the city expanded in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Roman grid at its center