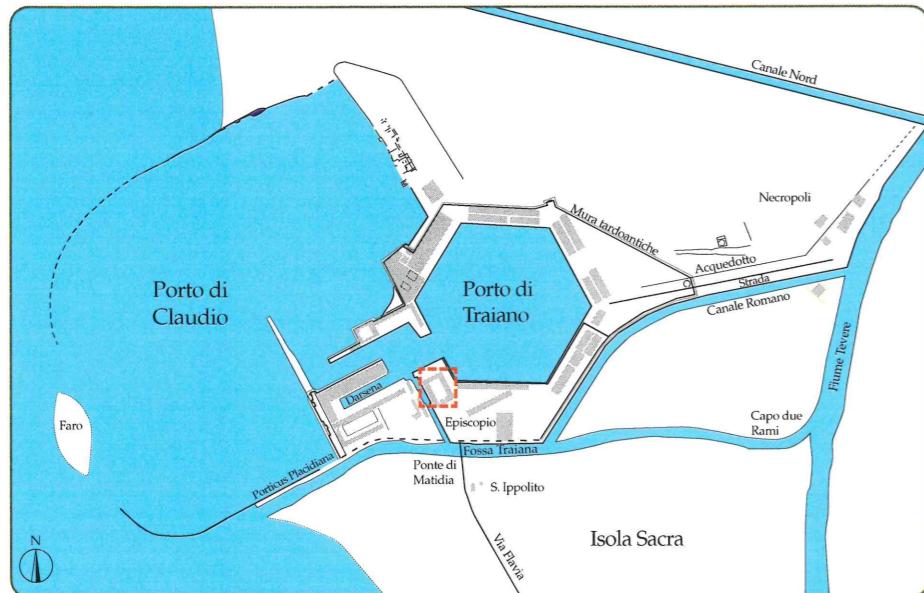




# PORTUS

## L'ABITATO ALTOMEDIEVALE DI PORTO



In un sondaggio condotto nel 1992 nell'area retrostante l'abside della Basilica Portuense è stato individuato un ambiente utilizzato in età altomedievale come abitazione. La casa impiegava come basamento i muri perimetrali di un ambiente di epoca classica, molto probabilmente un magazzino, restaurati con laterizi legati con argilla.

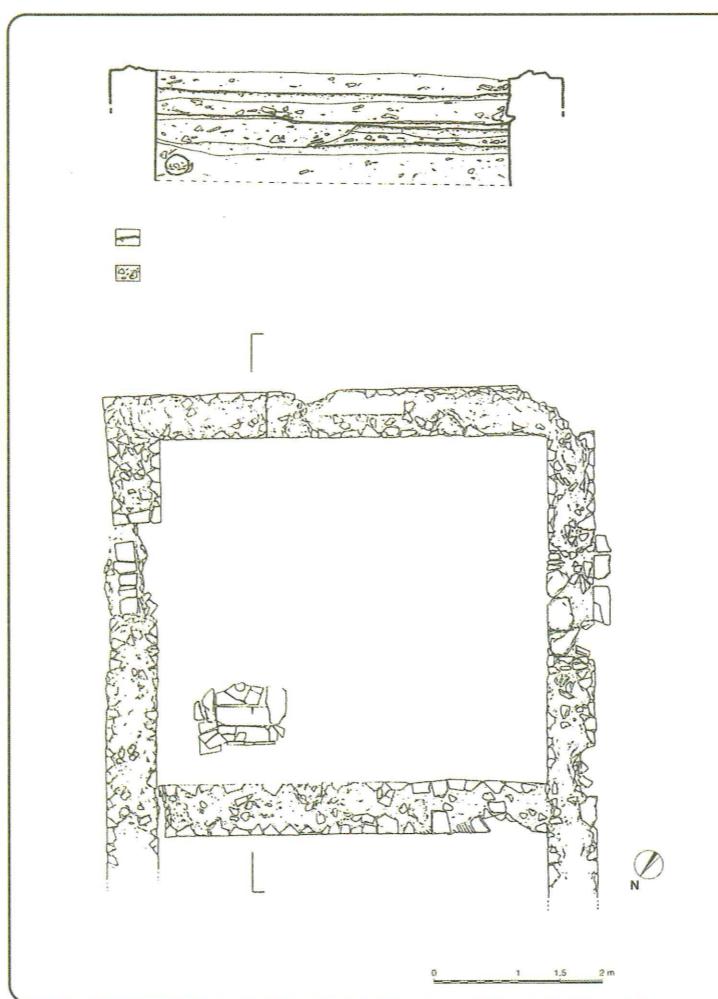
In un angolo della casa sono stati ritrovati tre focolari sovrapposti, costruiti con mattoni di recupero e circondati da strati di cenere sparsa sul pavimento in terra battuta. Associata ai focolari vi era ceramica invetriata e ceramica da fuoco altomedievale (VIII-IX secolo). L'elevato della casa può essere ricostruito con pareti di fango sulla base dello spesso strato di argilla rinvenuto su tutta l'area. È probabile che si tratti di una domus terrinea, simile a quelle rinvenute anche a Roma nel Foro di Cesare, la cui presenza è testimoniata a Porto anche dalle fonti altomedievali. Negli strati di riempimento sottostante il piano di calpestio altomedievale, che si trovava 2 metri circa al di sopra



Sepoltura infantile in anfora



Veduta della domus terrinea con il focolare



Planimetria e sezione della domus terrinea



L'area della basilica con la domus terrinea (1)

*During a survey carried out in 1992, an Early Middle Ages dwelling was identified in the area behind the apse of the Basilica Portuense. This house used the perimeter walls of a classic building (probably a warehouse) as its base, having patched them up with bricks and clay.*

*In a corner of the house there were three fireplaces, one on top of the other, built using recycled bricks and surrounded by layers of ash on the packed earth floor. Near the fires were examples of glazed pottery and terracotta from the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Centuries AD. A thick layer of clay found throughout the area lets us assume the house had wattle and daub walls. It is likely that this was a domus terrinea (one-storey house) similar to those found in Rome in the Forum of Caesar, the presence of which in Portus is also recorded by Early Middle Age sources.*

*A few infant tombs dating to the 7<sup>th</sup> Century have been found in the layers of earth below the floor of this house, which lay about 2 metres*

*above the original Roman floor. The remains had been placed in amphorae or on a tile. The custom of burying the dead within the city has been fully documented both in Rome and in other cities during Late Antiquity: many tombs have been found in Portus (5<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> Centuries) in various areas, including the warehouses and around the Basilica Portuense. Despite attempts to repopulate the area, mentioned by various sources, the population of the city of Portus gradually dwindled during the Early Middle Ages. After the year 1000, archives mention that only a few places of worship and a handful of farms existed on what had basically become a rural area. The "salare" (salt warehouses) dotted around the area of Portus remind us that salt used to be extracted in the Campus Salinarum Romanarum (salt marshes) during the Middle Ages, a technique that the Romans had copied from the Veii Etruscans in the days of Early Rome.*