

Roman Dinner Parties

<i>gustātiō</i> Starters	<i>prīmae mēnsae</i> Main dishes	<i>secundae mēnsae</i> Desserts
Leeks with olives	Stuffed hare with white sauce, dried peas, and leeks	Dates stuffed with nuts and pine kernels fried in honey
Snails fried in oil, garum, and pepper	Fallow deer roasted with onion sauce, Jericho dates, raisins, oil, and honey	Pastry cases filled with honey and walnuts
Sows' udders stuffed with salted sea-urchins	Dormice stuffed with pork and pine kernels	Milk and egg sweet
Mussels in sweet wine sauce	Ham boiled with figs and baked in pastry with honey	Fresh fruit – pomegranates, apples, grapes, plums
Boiled tree fungi with peppered garum sauce	Boiled chicken with dill sauce, cabbage, and green lentils	
	Mulsum – wine mixed with honey	

Martial invites a friend to dinner.

You'll have a nice meal, Julius, at my house; do come if you've nothing better to do. Keep the eighth hour (two o'clock) free; we'll go to Stephanus' baths beforehand, just next door. For starters, you'll get lettuce, fresh young leeks, then salted tuna a little bigger than a mackerel and garnished with eggs done up with rue; then more eggs, this time baked to a turn in a moderate oven with cheese and olives. For the main course, you can have fish and oysters, sow-belly, chicken, and duck. I promise I won't recite anything, but you can read me your poem *The Giants* again, or recite some of the ones about the countryside.

Pliny complains about a guest who failed to turn up.

What do you mean by accepting my invitation to dinner and then not turning up? It was all set out, a lettuce each, three snails, two eggs, barley-water, wine with honey, chilled with snow (an expensive item, please note, since it disappears in the dish!), some olives, beets, gherkins, onions, and plenty of other delicacies as well. You could have had a comic play, a poetry reading, or a singer. But no, instead you preferred to go where you could have oysters, sows' innards, sea urchins, and Spanish dancing girls!

Design an invitation to a *cēna*, using Roman names and referring to Roman customs. Select your menu and describe the entertainments.