

V

Hypotrimma: Pepper, lovage, dried mint, pine nuts, raisins, dates, sweet cheese, honey, vinegar, *garum*, oil, wine, and *defrutum* or *caroenum*.

3 oz. (100 g.) fresh soft cheese (e.g., ricotta)

1 cup olive oil

1 tsp. honey

1 tsp. *garum*

1 Tbs. vinegar

1 Tbs. *defrutum* or *caroenum*

pinch of pepper

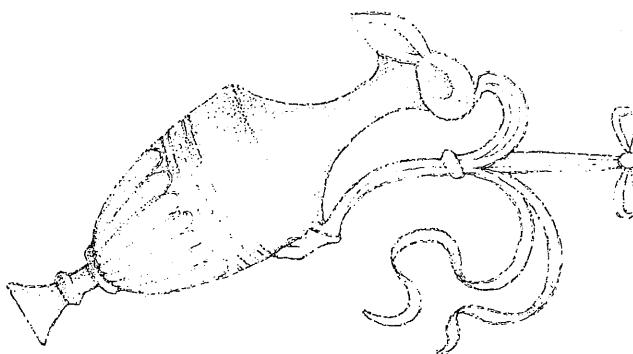
1 Tbs. total, lovage and mint

1 handful of pine nuts and raisins, mixed

4–5 pitted and chopped dates

Place all ingredients but the pine nuts, raisins, and dates in a blender, and mix thoroughly. Mix in the nuts and fruit afterward by hand.

This is a tasty and unusual sauce, a kind of ancestor of the delicate French salad dressing based on Roquefort cheese. It goes well with raw or cooked leafy lettuce or Belgian endive.



APPETIZERS GUSTUM

Goose liver

Behold how this liver is larger than the largest goose.
You will say in astonishment: "This liver, I ask, where did it grow?"

(Martial 13, 58)

Figpeckers

Since the fig nourishes me, but I also feed on sweet grapes,
why did the grape not give me my name?

(Martian 13, 49)

Eggs

If a white wave surrounds the yellow yolk,
let a sauce of Spanish mackerel season the eggs.

(Martian 13, 40)

Oysters

I am a shellfish freshly arrived, drunk with the Lucrine
Lake near Baiae;

A lover of luxury, now I thirst for noble *garum*.

(Martian 13, 82)

The Romans served many different appetizers to begin their banquets. The most popular items were seasoned eggs and egg-based dishes, vegetables, salad, mushrooms and truffles, assorted shellfish, cheese with herbs, olives, sausages, and even more filling dishes, such as complicated fricassées and casseroles, which today would be considered complete meals in themselves. You should select at least two or three different dishes from among

the choices in this chapter to serve together—variety was very important—and accompany them with chilled *mulsum*.

EGGS

Hard-boiled eggs (*ova elixa*): Garnish with the sauce described in Apicius 328, pp. 46–47.

Medium-boiled eggs (*ova apala*): Garnish with the delicate pine nut sauce in Apicius 329, p. 47.

Fried eggs (*ova frixa*): Fry the eggs in *garum* mixed with wine (Apicius 327).

Salad with eggs and tuna: Prepare a bed of washed and dried lettuce. Place albacore tuna on it, then cover with slices of hard-boiled eggs. I suggest serving both *garum* and olive oil on the side. This is an appetizer based on a description in Martial (11, 52; see chapter 13, p. 199).

Eggs and artichokes: See Apicius 112, pp. 141–42.

EGG-BASED DISHES, CHEESES, AND PÂTÉS

CONCICLA À LA COMMODUS

(APICIUS 198)

Concicla Commodiana: Pisam coques. Cum despumaverit, teres piper, ligusticum, anetum, cepam siccam, suffundis liquamen, uno et liquamine temperabis. Mittis in caccabum ut combibat. Deinde ova III solves, in sextarium pisae mittis, agites, mittis in cumana, ad ignem ponis ut dicat, et inferes.

Concicla à la Commodus: Cook peas. When they begin to put out a froth, grind pepper, lovage, dill, and dried onion, moisten with *garum*, and mix with wine and *garum*. Put it in the pot [with the peas] so that it can be absorbed. Then add 4 beaten eggs for every *sextarius* of peas, stir, put it in a baking dish, place in the oven so that it sets, and serve.

Serves 4
4½ lb. (2 kg.) fresh peas in the shell
4 eggs

For the sauce:

1 tsp. each of pepper, lovage, and dill
1 Tbs. dried onion

1 Tbs. wine

Shell and boil the peas, drain them, and then put them through a vegetable grinder. Mix the herbs and dried onion together with the wine and *garum* to make a sauce, and add to the ground peas.

Beat the eggs well; if you desire a soufflé, separate the eggs, beat the yolks, and stiffly whip the whites. Combine the eggs with the pea mixture. Place in an ovenproof dish, bake 20–25 minutes in a hot oven (400°F.) and serve.

This delicate dish was apparently dedicated to the emperor Commodus Antonius (161–92), son of and successor to Marcus Aurelius. For a discussion of the term *concicla*, see the Glossary.

ASPARAGUS AND FIGPECKER PATINA

(APICIUS 132)

Patina de asparagi frigida: Accipies asparagos purgatos, in mortario fricabis, aqua suffundes, perfricabis, per colum scriptulos sex, adicies liquamen, fricabis, vini ciatum I, passi ciatum I, mittes in caccabum olei uncias III. Illic feruant. Perungues patinam, in ea ova VI cum oenogaro misces, cum succo asparagi impones cineri calido, mittes in pensam supra scriptam. Tunc ficellulas compones. Coques, piper asperges et inferes.

A cold asparagus *patina*: Take cleaned asparagus, crush them in a mortar, pour on water, crush thoroughly, and strain. Put plucked and cleaned figpeckers [in a pot]. Grind 6 scruples of pepper in a mortar; add *garum* and grind; add 1 *cyathus* of wine, 1 *cyathus* of *passum*, and put this in a pot with 3 *unciae* of oil. Bring to a boil. Grease a pan, mix 6 eggs together with *oenogaram* in it, add the asparagus puree, and place it in embers. Put in the ingredients described above. Then add the figpeckers. Cook, sprinkle with pepper, and serve.

Serves 4
4 quail (or chicken breasts)
4½ lb. (2 kg.) asparagus
6 eggs

For the sauce:
ample pepper corns
1 Tbs. *garum*
1 Tbs. wine
1 Tbs. *passum*
2 Tbs. olive oil

Figpeckers, songbirds with thin beaks, were considered particularly delicious fare by the Romans. Because they are obviously hard to find today, you can use quail or chicken breasts in their place.

The recipe assumes that the plucked and cleaned birds have been half cooked before they are arranged on the bottom of an ovenproof dish. Prepare the sauce as described above: grind the pepper, add the *garum* and mix; follow with the wine, *passum*, and olive oil, and heat. Boil, drain, and strain the asparagus. Beat 6 eggs well and mix with the asparagus. Then add the sauce and mix well. Pour this mixture over the birds and bake at 375°F. for 25–30 minutes.

This dish may also be served cold, as its Latin title suggests.

For a discussion of the term *patina*, see the Glossary.

ASPARAGUS PATINA WITH HERBS

(Apicius 133)

Aliter *patina de asparagi*: Adicies in mortario asparagorum praecisuras quae proiciuntur, teres, suffundes vinum, colas. Teres piper, ligusticum, coriandrum viridem, saturiam, cerasm, vimnum, liquamen et oleum. Sucum transferes in patellam perunctam et, si volueris, ova dissolbes ad ignem, ut obliget. Piper minutum asperges.

Another asparagus *patina*: Put asparagus ends, which are usually cut away, in a mortar, grind, pour wine over them, and strain. Grind pepper, lovage, fresh coriander, savory, onion, wine, *garum*, and oil. Transfer the sauce into a greased pan and, if you wish, beat in eggs when it is over the fire to thicken. Sprinkle with finely ground pepper.

The following recipe is traced to an ancient people living in the region of Apulia. The quantities here can serve as a point of reference for the Apician recipe above.

REGIONAL ITALIAN RECIPE (Apulia)

Daunian Asparagus Frittata

Serves 4
2 lb. (1 kg.) wild asparagus
5 eggs
1 Tbs. grated pecorino cheese
1 handful of fresh parsley, minced
salt and pepper to taste

Clean, boil, and chop the asparagus. Beat the eggs in a large bowl; mix in the grated cheese, parsley, salt, pepper, and asparagus. Cook this mixture like a frittata and serve hot.

LETTUCE PATINA

(APICIUS 130)

Aliter *patina*: Tymrum lactucae teres cum pipere, liquamine, carenio, aqua, oleo. Coques, ovis obligabis, piper asperges et inferves.

Another *patina*: Grind lettuce stalks with pepper, *garum*, *carenium*, water, and oil. Cook, thicken with eggs, sprinkle with pepper, and serve.

Serves 4
3 bunches romaine lettuce
1 Tbs. *garum*
ca. ¼ cup *carenium*
1 Tbs. olive oil
sufficient water
4 eggs

Coarsely chop the lettuce and heat it in a pan with the pepper, *garum*, *carenium*, olive oil, and water. Do not begin with too much liquid; you can add more if necessary while it cooks. Meanwhile, beat the eggs. Add them to the mixture and finish cooking either on the stove or in the oven, as you prefer. The recipe does not specify which cooking method to use, and it can in fact be successfully realized both ways.

PATINA WITH BRAIN

(APICIUS 128)

Patina cotidiana: Cerebella elixata teres cum pipere, cuminio, lasere. Cum liquamine, careo, lactic et ovis ad ignem lerem vel ad aquam calidam coques.

An everyday *patina*: Grind boiled brain with pepper, cumin, and silphium. Cook over a low fire or over hot water with *garum*, *caroenum*, milk, and eggs.

Serves 4

- 2 lamb brains (or 1 veal brain)
- pinch of pepper
- pinch of cumin
- 1 garlic clove, pressed for its juice
- 4 eggs
- 1 Tbs. *garum*
- 1 Tbs. *caroenum*
- ½ cup milk

Boil the lamb or veal brain. Grind it in a mortar together with a bit of pepper and cumin and the garlic juice. In a bowl beat the eggs, then combine them with the brain mixture. Add the *garum*, *caroenum*, and milk. Cook as for a frittata.

This dish is still very popular in Lebanon and Syria, where they consider lamb brain a delicacy.

CHEESE ROUND WITH HERBS

(APPENDIX VERGILIANA, MORETUM)

Quattuor alia, apius, ruta, coriandrum, salis micas, caseus.

Four garlic cloves, celery, rue, coriander, salt grains, and cheese.

In a mortar grind the garlic, then the fresh soft cheese, and finally the herbs (use celery leaf or parsley), so that these ingredients are thoroughly blended. The mixture can be moistened with olive oil, followed by a small amount of strong vinegar. Form the mixture into a round and chill.

Along with this herb cheese, the farmer protagonist of this poem *More-*

tum ate a kind of focaccia carefully prepared in the following manner: first wheat kernels were ground and the resulting flour was sifted; then the flour was mixed with water, aromatic herbs, and salt, and kneaded at length; finally the dough was formed into a flat round and the top surface was given a latticed decoration with the side of the hand. It was baked at the hearth in embers.

We can reproduce this same type of bread, baking it in the oven or cooking it in a nonstick pan so that no oil is needed.

CHEESE ROUND WITH HERBS

(APICIUS 41)

Moretaria: Mentam, rutam, coriandum, feniculum, omnia viridia, ligusticum, piper, mel, liquamen. Si opus fuerit, acetum addes.

Condiment for a *moretum*: Mint, rue, coriander, fennel, all fresh, lovage, pepper, honey, and *garum*. If necessary, add vinegar.

Grind the herbs in a mortar; mix with the honey, *garum*, and olive oil. Blend with a fresh soft cheese, such as ricotta (not mentioned in the recipe, which lists only the ingredients used to season it).

This cheese is also good warmed: place it in a preheated oven (400°F.) for about 15–20 minutes. Serve with roasted sausage and seasoned olives.

A similar type of heated herb cheese is popular in Abruzzo, where the herbs are also used to cover the ricotta instead of being blended in with it.

CHILLED CHEESE AND CHICKEN LIVER PÂTÉ

(APICIUS 125)

Sala cattabia: Piper, mentam, apium, puleum aridum, caseum, nucleos pineos, mel, acetum, liquamen, ovorum vitella, aquam recentem. Panem ex posca maceratum explices, caseum bubulum, cucumeres in caccabulo compones, interpositus nucleus. Mittes concisi capparis minutissimae, nucusculis gallinarum. Ius profundes, super frigidam collocabis et sic appones.

Sala cattabia: [Grind] pepper, mint, celery, dried pennyroyal, cheese, pine nuts, honey, vinegar, *garum*, egg yolk, and fresh water. In a pot arrange bread that has been soaked in *posca* and squeezed to remove excess liquid, cheese made of cow's milk, and cucumbers, interspersed with pine nuts. Add finely minced capers, . . . chicken livers. Cover with the sauce, place it over a container of cold water to cool, and serve thus.

7–8 slices whole-wheat bread, crust removed
diluted vinegar (to soak the bread)

1 lb. ($\frac{1}{2}$ kg.) ricotta
2 Tbs. capers, minced (optional)
14 oz. (400 g.) chicken livers
2 large parboiled cucumbers (or 6 pickles), sliced
3 oz. (100 g.) pine nuts

For the sauce:

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. pepper

1 tsp. each, fresh minced mint and parsley

1 tsp. pennyroyal

1 Tbs. grated cheese

3 oz. (100 g.) pine nuts

1 tsp. honey

1 Tbs. vinegar

1 Tbs. *garum*

3 hard-boiled egg yolks

1 Tbs. water

This recipe, though surviving in fragmentary form, can still be realized with excellent results. The meaning of the name *sala cattabia*, which appears in this recipe and the two that follow, remains a mystery. Nonetheless, the result here is a dish similar to the French *terrine*.

Prepare a sauce from the ingredients listed above. Soak the bread in the diluted vinegar (*posca*: see the Glossary), squeeze, and mix it with the ricotta.

Fry the chicken livers in a bit of olive oil and then pass them through a meat grinder twice. Now begin to fill a casserole with layers of the various ingredients, distributing a tablespoon of the sauce over each: the first layer cucumbers or pickles, then pine nuts, then cheese and bread, a sprinkling of capers if desired, then chicken liver. Continue in this order, providing at least two layers of each. Chill for several hours before serving.

CHILLED CHICKEN, SWEETBREAD, AND CHEESE PÂTÉ

(APICIUS 126)

Aliter sala cattabia Apicana: Adicies in mortario apii semen, puleium aridum, mentam aridam, gingiber, coriandrum viridem, uiam passam enucleatam, mel, acetum, oleum et vinum, conteres. Adicies in caccabulo panis Picentini frusta, interpones pinpas pulli, glandulas haedinas, caseum Vestinum, nucleos pineos, cucumeres, cepas aridas minute concisas. Ius supra perfundes. Insuper niuem sub hora asperges et inferves.

Another *sala cattabia à la Apicius*: In a mortar put celery seeds, dried pennyroyal, dried mint, ginger, fresh coriander, seedless raisins, honey, vinegar, oil, and wine. Grind together. In a pot put small pieces of Picentine bread, alternated with chicken meat, kid sweetbreads, Vestine cheese, pine nuts, cucumbers, and minced dried onion. Pour the sauce over this. Then sprinkle with snow [over the cover to chill] and serve.

3 chicken breasts

1 veal sweetbread

2 large parboiled cucumbers (or 6 pickles), sliced

14 oz. (400 g.) grated Parmesan or mild pecorino cheese

7–8 slices whole-wheat bread, crust removed

diluted vinegar (to soak the bread)

1 lb. ($\frac{1}{2}$ kg.) ricotta

2 Tbs. capers, minced (optional)

14 oz. (400 g.) chicken livers

2 large parboiled cucumbers (or 6 pickles), sliced

3 oz. (100 g.) pine nuts

For the sauce:

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. pepper

1 tsp. each, fresh minced mint and parsley

Prepare the sauce with the herbs, raisins, honey, vinegar, wine, and oil.

Soak the bread in the diluted vinegar and squeeze out the excess liquid. Boil the chicken breasts and cut into small pieces; boil the sweetbread and slice. Place the cucumbers, bread, cheese, chicken, and sweetbread slices in alternating layers in a casserole, beginning with the cucumbers or pickles, and covering each layer with a tablespoon of the sauce. Chill for several hours before serving.

Picenum was a region to the northeast of Rome, corresponding in part to modern-day Marches. The bread of Picenum was a type of sweet, dry flatbread consisting of flour kneaded with grape juice, which was soaked in milk before it was eaten (cf. Pliny, *Naturalis historia* 18, 106, and Martial 13, 47).

The Vestines inhabited a region to the east of Rome, along the Aterno River (in what is now Pescara). The cheese they produced was among those most in demand by the Romans. Although we do not know what type of milk was used, it would appear that Vestine cheese was dry, thus it was grated for use.

HERBAL BREAD AND CHEESE

(APICIUS 127)

Altiter sala cattabia: Panem Alexandrinum excavabis, in posca macerabis. Adicies in mortarium piper, mel, mentam, alium, coriandrum viridem, caseum bubulum sale conditum, aquam, oleum. Insuper nivem et inferes.

Another recipe for *sala cattabia*: Cut out the center of Alexandria bread and soak it in *posca*. In a mortar put pepper, honey, mint, garlic, fresh coriander, salted cheese made from cow's milk, water, and oil. Put snow over [the cover to chill] and serve.

1 lb. ($\frac{1}{2}$ kg.) coarse-textured bread, crust removed
diluted vinegar (to soak the bread)
1 lb. ($\frac{1}{2}$ kg.) ricotta (or other fresh cheese)
pepper to taste

1 Tbs. honey
1 Tbs. total, minced fresh mint and coriander
2 cloves garlic, minced
sufficient water

sufficient olive oil

Soak the bread in the diluted vinegar (*posca*), then squeeze the excess liquid from it. Put the bread in a bowl and mix it thoroughly with the remaining ingredients, adjusting the water and oil to maintain a reasonably firm consistency. Chill before serving.

For a discussion of Alexandrian bread, see Sweet Buns with Must (Apicius 297), page 158.

LIVER PÂTÉ

(APICIUS 430)

Iecur coques, teres et mittes piper aut liquamen aut salem, addes oleum—iecur leporis aut haedi aut agni aut pulli—et, si volueris, in formella piscem formabis. Oleum viridem supra adicies.

Cook liver, grind it, add pepper or *garum* or salt, add oil—use the liver of hare, kid, lamb, or chicken—and, if you wish, mold it in a fish-shaped pan. Pour green oil over.

Serves 4

1 lb. ($\frac{1}{2}$ kg.) liver (possibly a mix of chicken, lamb, and veal)
pepper to taste
garum to taste

sufficient olive oil

Fry the liver, flavoring it with a bit of pepper and *garum*, and then pass it twice through a meat grinder. Adjust the consistency with oil; taste and add more *garum* and pepper if necessary. Put it in a form and chill for several hours.

This pâté is included in a small group of recipes entitled *salsum sine salse* (salted fish without the salted fish), referring to the Roman custom of disguising certain dishes so that their ingredients could not be distinguished; hence the option here of forming the pâté to resemble a fish. Obviously, you can use any form you choose.

OLIVE PASTE OR EPITYRUM

(CATO 119)

Epityrum album, nigrum, varium sic facito. Ex oleis albis, nigris varicisque nucleos ecito. Sic condito. Concidito ipsas, addito oleum, acetum, coriandrum, cuminum, fenniculum, rutam, mentam. In orculum condito, oleum supra siet. Ita utitur.

Make green, black, or varicolored *epityrum* in this way. Pit the green, black, or varicolored olives. Season them thus: Chop them, and add oil, vinegar, coriander, cumin, fennel, rue, and mint. Put them in a small jar, with oil on top, and they are ready to use.

Pit the olives, then mix them in a blender with the herbs, olive oil, and vinegar. Avoid the temptation to add any salt, since the olives we buy today are already sufficiently salted.

The Greeks and Romans ate this olive paste together with cheese, whence the derivation of its name (*epityrum* = over cheese). Varro (*De lingua latina* 7, 86) described it as a Greek recipe, and Columella (12, 49, 9) suggested that the olives be seasoned with salt, lentiscus, rue, and fennel.

Olive paste is available for sale today, so you can purchase it instead if you are pressed for time. However, it is far more aromatic and flavorful if you make it from scratch.

You can serve this olive paste following ancient custom, that is, as an appetizer together with ricotta or other fresh cheese; or you can spread it on small slices of toast. In this latter case, you should offer both green and black olive paste to make a more attractive presentation. In Umbria, where olives and olive oil are particularly good, *epityrum* is still used to dress even such "modern" dishes as spaghetti.

Here is a delicious specialty from Perugia for comparison:

REGIONAL ITALIAN RECIPE

(Umbria)

Black Spaghetti with Olive Paste

Sauté a large garlic clove in $\frac{1}{2}$ cup olive oil without allowing it to turn brown. Remove from the heat and add 4 tablespoons of olive paste and a generous amount of minced parsley. This is sufficient for 1 lb. ($\frac{1}{2}$ kg.) of spaghetti.

Olive paste is also used today in tomato sauce for pasta and for stewed chicken.

MODERN TURKISH RECIPE Arugula and Watercress Salad

Serves 4

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| 1 large bunch arugula (garden rocket) |
| 1 bunch watercress |
| 2 garlic cloves, pressed for their juice |
| salt and pepper to taste |
| olive oil to taste |
| vinegar to taste |

The Romans widely believed that the extremely aromatic and bitter arugula was an aphrodisiac. Perhaps this summer salad green continues to be similarly regarded by those populations who consume it.

MODERN ROMANIAN RECIPE Salad with Bread and Olives

Pit and chop around 30 olives. Put them in a salad bowl, and add 3–4 slices of coarse-textured bread that have been soaked in vinegar and broken into small pieces. Add a few sprigs of lavender and some olive oil. When the flavors have had sufficient time to blend, add washed and dried salad greens (preferably watercress) and toss.

Although the Romans used lavender for food purposes, modern Italians no longer generally do so. However, this recipe demonstrates the fact that it continues to be consumed in the Middle East and the Balkan peninsula. The common Italian word for lavender, *lavanda*, is nothing more than a corruption of *levantica*, meaning "from the Levant."

VEGETABLES AND SEAFOOD

SWEET-AND-SOUR TURNIPS OR RUTABAGAS

(APICIUS 100)

Rapas sive napos: Elixatos exprimes, deinde teres cum inum plurimum, rutam minus, laser parthicum, mel, acerum, liquamen, defritum et oleum modice. Fervore facies et inferes.

The Romans also offered salad as an appetizer, a custom that still survives in Switzerland and Germany. You can follow the Roman practice, serving romaine lettuce, endive, and chicory, mixed with mallow and lavender, and seasoned with the Cheese Sauce for Lettuce (Apicius 38) on pp. 47–48. Or you can use the following recipes: the first one is popular throughout the Middle East, especially Turkey, and the second one is Romanian.

Turnips or rutabagas: Once they are boiled, squeeze the excess liquid from them, then grind a generous amount of cumin, a smaller amount of rue, silphium, honey, vinegar, *garum*, *defrutum*, and a bit of oil. Bring to a boil and serve.

Serves 4

2 lb. (1 kg.) turnips or rutabagas

ample cumin

1 tsp. rue

2 garlic cloves, pressed for their juice

1 tsp. honey

½ cup vinegar

1 Tbs. *garum* or *oenogarum*

1 Tbs. *defrutum*

1–2 Tbs. olive oil

Peel and boil the turnips or rutabagas. Drain, slice, and arrange in a casserole with a sauce consisting of the cumin, rue, garlic juice (in place of the silphium), honey, vinegar, *garum*, *defrutum*, and olive oil. Heat for several minutes to steep, then serve.

Vinegar and honey mixed together in a vegetable recipe was fairly common in Roman cooking. Italians still enjoy baby onions cooked with vinegar and sugar, and the inhabitants of the region of Trentino typically cook turnips with the same mixture.

SQUASH APPETIZER

(APICIUS 73)

Gustum de cucurbitas: Cucurbitas coctas expressas in patinam compones. Adicies in mortarium piper, cuminum, luffi modice (*id est* laseris radicem), rutam modicum, luffam et acetum temperabis, mittes defrutum modicum ut coloretur, ius eximianies in patinam. Cum feruerint item ac tertio, depones et piper minutum asperges.

Squash appetizer: Arrange cooked, squeezed, and drained squash in a pan. Put pepper, cumin, a bit of silphium (that is, *laser* root), and a bit of rue in a mortar; mix with *garum* and vinegar, and add a bit of *defrutum* to color; empty the sauce into the pan. When it has boiled a second and third time, remove from the heat and sprinkle with ground pepper.

OYSTERS AND MIXED SHELLFISH SALAD

Use the sauce recipes Apicius 31 and Apicius 413, which you can find on p. 44, to season oysters and mixed shellfish. The Romans ate oysters both raw and cooked.

FRIED ANCHOVY PATINA

(APICIUS 147)

Patina de apua fricta: Apuanum lavas, ova confinges et cum apua commisches. Adicies liquamen, vimum, oleum, facies ut ferueat et cum feruerit, mittes apuanum. Cum duxerit, substitueris. Facies ut colore, oenogarum simplex perfundes, piper asperges et infieres.

Serves 4

2 lb. (1 kg.) squash, cut into pieces

1 Tbs. total, pepper, cumin, and rue

1 garlic clove, pressed for its juice

1 Tbs. *garum*

1 cup vinegar

1 cup *defrutum*

Boil (or, even better, bake) the squash, squeeze out the excess liquid, and arrange in a pot. Make the sauce by combining the remaining ingredients. Pour the sauce over the squash, reheat and steep for several minutes, and serve.

SEASONED MELON

(APICIUS 85)

Pepones et melones: Piper, pulegium, mel vel passum, liquamen, acetum. Interdum et sili accedit.

Cantaloupe and melons: Pepper, pennyroyal, honey or *passum*, *garum*, and vinegar. Sometimes silphium is added.

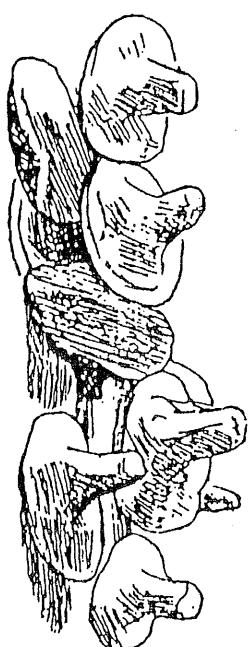
Modern Italians continue to offer cantaloupe as an antipasto, but certainly not with this herb vinaigrette. You may be put off at first by the unusual flavor, but it grows on you quickly. Remember to use garlic juice as a substitute for silphium.

A *patina* of fried anchovies: Wash anchovies, break eggs, and mix with the anchovies. Take *garum*, wine, and oil, and bring to a boil. When it has boiled, put in the anchovies. When one side sets, turn carefully. Let them brown, pour *oenogarum* made from common wine over them, sprinkle with pepper, and serve.

Serves 4

- 1 1/4 lb. (600 g.) anchovies or other small fish
- 1 egg
- 1 Tbs. *garum*
- 1 Tbs. wine
- 1 cup olive oil
- pepper to taste
- 1 Tbs. *oenogarum*

Clean and gut the fish. Dip them in the beaten egg and fry in a sauce of *garum*, wine, and olive oil. Brown quickly on both sides, no more than 10 minutes total cooking time. Season with pepper and serve with *oenogarum*.



MUSHROOMS AND TRUFFLES

Mushrooms and truffles have long been considered a culinary luxury. The Romans ate both white and black truffles in delicate salads, as you can see from the two recipes included here. They also ate mushrooms raw in salads, boiled and covered with sauce, or cooked directly in a sauce or on a grill. There was even a special serving dish called a *boletarium* or *boletar*.

Although it is not always possible to determine what varieties of mushrooms they ate from the names they used, undoubtedly there were boletus or cepes (which the Romans called *suilli*), morels (*morchellae*), different edible agarics (including meadow mushrooms and the *amantia Caesarea*), and ash tree mushrooms (*fungi farnei*), which seem to be a variety of those

mushrooms the Italians today call *polipori*. The Greeks and perhaps the Romans even attempted to cultivate mushrooms, but they were unsuccessful.

TRUFFLE SALAD

(APICIUS 35 AND 36)

Oenogarum in tubera: *Piper, ligusticum, coriandum, rutam, liquamen, mel, [vinum] et oleum modice.*
Oenogarum for truffles: Pepper, lovage, coriander, rue, honey, [wine], and a bit of oil.
Aliter: *Timum, satureiam, piper, ligusticum, mel, [vinum], liquamen et oleum.*

Another recipe: Thyme, summer savory, pepper, lovage, honey, [wine], *garum*, and oil.

Slice the truffles and season them with either of these sauces. You can use *oenogarum* instead of *garum* and wine in both recipes.

MUSHROOM CAPS

(APICIUS 314)

Boletos: Caliculos eorum liquamine vel sale aspersos inferunt.

Mushrooms: The caps are served sprinkled with *garum* or salt.

Use the caps from large, firm boletus mushrooms. Grill them and serve sprinkled with *garum*.

SEASONED MUSHROOM STEMS

(APICIUS 315)

Boletos aliter: Tirso eorum concisos in patellam novam perfundis, addito pipere, ligustico, modo melle; liquamine temperabis; oleum modice.

Another recipe for mushrooms: Put the chopped stems in a clean pan, add pepper, lovage, and a bit of honey; mix with *garum*; [add] a bit of oil.

Serves 4

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| 1 lb. ($\frac{1}{2}$ kg.) mushroom stems (or whole mushrooms) | 1 Tbs. honey |
| 1 handful of fresh lovage or parsley | $\frac{1}{2}$ cup wine |
| 2 Tbs. olive oil | $\frac{1}{2}$ cup <i>passum</i> |
| pepper to taste | 1 tsp. <i>garum</i> |
| $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. honey | 1 tsp. cornstarch |
| 1 Tbs. <i>garum</i> | 1 Tbs. pepper |

Apparently a sensible gourmet, the author included a recipe for mushroom stems, since the caps were to be grilled separately.

Finely chop the lovage or parsley. Cut the stems into small pieces and sauté in a pan with the olive oil, pepper, lovage or parsley, honey, and *garum*. Naturally, you can use the entire mushroom for a better flavor. The Romans used this method to cook large wild meadow mushrooms; it is also good for both boletus and cultivated mushrooms.

OTHER APPETIZERS

APRICOT APPETIZER

(APICIUS 178)

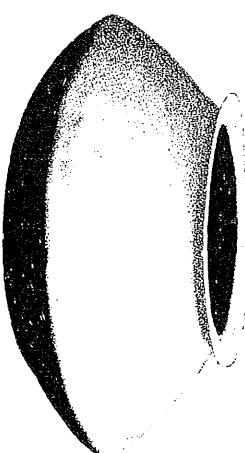
Gustum de praecoquia: *Duracina primotica pusilla. Prae-coquia purgas, enucleas, in frigidam mittis, in patina comporis. Teres piper, mentam siccam, suffundis liquamen, ad-icies mel, passum, vitrum et acetum. Refundis in patina super praecoquia, olei modicum mittis et lento igni ferveat.*
Cum ferbuferit, annulo obligas, piper aspargis et inferes.

Apricot appetizer: Clean the apricots (young clingstone), remove the pits, and put them in cold water. Then arrange them in a pan. Grind pepper and dried mint, moisten with *garum*, and add honey, *passum*, wine, and vinegar, pour into the pan over the apricots, add a bit of oil, and cook over a low fire. When it boils, thicken with starch, sprinkle with pepper, and serve.

Serves 4
4½ lb. (2 kg.) apricots
1 Tbs. mint

1 Tbs. honey
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup wine
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup *passum*
1 tsp. *garum*
1 tsp. cornstarch
1 Tbs. pepper

Clean the apricots and remove the pits, then cook in the sauce consisting of all the remaining ingredients but the starch (dissolved in water) and pepper, which should be added at the last minute.
I have omitted the vinegar from the list of ingredients only because it made the dish inedible for me. You may, of course, find it perfectly appropriate and appealing, in which case 1 teaspoon should suffice.



APRICOT FRICASSEE

(APICIUS 170)

Minutal ex praecoquia: *Adicies in caccabo oleum, liquamen, vinum, concides cepam Ascaloniam arietem, spatulam porcinam coctam tessellatim concides. His omnibus coctis teres piper, cuminum, mentam siccam, anetum, suffundis mel, liquamen, passum, acetum modice, ius de sibi, temperabis. Praecocchia enucleata mittis, facies ut fervent, donec percoquantur. Tractam confringes, ex ea obligas, piper aspargis et inferes.*

Fricassee with apricots: In a pot put oil, *garum*, and wine; chop dried Ascalonian onion, and dice cooked pork shoulder. When all these things are cooked, grind pepper, cumin, dried mint, and dill; moisten with honey, *garum*, *passum*, a bit of vinegar, and the cooking juice; mix. Add pitted apricots, bring to boil, and heat until cooked. Thicken with crumbled *tracta*, sprinkle with pepper, and serve.

Serves 4

10 oz. (300 g.) single slab raw bacon

1 lb. ($\frac{1}{2}$ kg.) apricots

1 lb. ($\frac{1}{2}$ kg.) onions (or scallions)

1 Tbs. olive oil

1 Tbs. *garum*

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup wine

For the sauce:

1 Tbs. total, pepper, cumin, mint, and dill

1 tsp. honey

1 cup *passum*

1 Tbs. *garum*

1 Tbs. pork drippings

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup semolina or couscous

Cut the bacon into cubes. Mince the onion or scallions ("Ascalonian onions") and sauté until golden in the oil, *garum*, and wine. Add the bacon and continue to cook.

Meanwhile, prepare the sauce with the first five ingredients listed. Pit the apricots and cut them into quarters. Add them to the bacon along with the sauce and cook until the apricots are soft. Thicken with semolina or couscous, which replaces the *tracta* in the recipe (see the Glossary). Total cooking time should be approximately 50–60 minutes.

Serves 4

7 oz. (200 g.) pork liver

2 each, chicken thighs and wings

2 lb. (1 kg.) onions

2 Tbs. olive oil

2 Tbs. *garum*

2 Tbs. wine

For the sauce:

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup wine

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup *passum*

1 Tbs. *garum*

pepper to taste

1 Tbs. lovage

1 tsp. cornstarch

This recipe calls for bulbs, perhaps flower bulbs. The Romans would sometimes cook gladiolus or asphodel bulbs, but the bitter bulbs of today's cultivated flowers are inedible. Thus our only available substitution is the common everyday onion.

Cut the pork liver into pieces; do the same with the chicken wings and thighs (or better, have it done by your butcher). Slice the onions and let them cook in the olive oil, *garum*, and wine to blend the flavors; add the meat and cook for 30 minutes. Meanwhile, prepare the sauce by mixing together the first five ingredients listed. Add this sauce and continue to cook for another 30 minutes. Thicken with dissolved cornstarch before serving.

The name of this recipe belies the fact that it is a rather substantial dish of meat and onions.

ONION APPETIZER

(Apicius 176)

Gustum de holeribus: Condies bulbos liquamine, oleo et vino. Cum cocti fuerint, tecumera porcelli et gallinarum et unguellas et ascellas divisas, haec omnia cum bulbis fermeant. Cum feruerint, teres piper, ligusticum, suffundis liquamen, vinum et passum ut dulce sit, ius de suo sibi suffundis, revocas in bulbos. Cum feruerint, ad momentum amulo obligas.

Vegetable appetizer: Season bulbs with *garum*, oil, and wine. When they are cooked, [take] pork liver and chicken wings and thighs cut up, and cook everything with the bulbs. When they are boiled, grind pepper and lovage; pour on *garum*, wine and *passum* to sweeten it, and cook ing broth, and pour it over the bulbs. As soon as they are boiled, thicken with starch.

Serves 4

7 oz. (200 g.) concia

2 each, chicken thighs and wings

2 lb. (1 kg.) onions

2 Tbs. olive oil

2 Tbs. *garum*

2 Tbs. wine

For the sauce:

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup wine

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup *passum*

1 Tbs. *garum*

pepper to taste

1 Tbs. lovage

1 tsp. cornstarch

CONCICLA À LA APICIUS

(APICIUS 196)

Concicla Apicianam: Accipies cumam mundam ubi coques pisum. Cui mittis lucanicas concisas, esciola porcina, pulpas petasoris. Teres piper, ligusticum, origanum, anetum, cepam siccam, coriandrum viridem, suffundis liquamen, vino et liquamine temperabis. Mittis in cumam, cui adicies oleum, pungis ubique et combatit oleum. Igni lento coques ita ut ferueat et inferes.

Concilia à la Apicius: Take a clean earthenware pot to

cook peas. Add chopped Lucanian sausages, small pork

patties, and shoulder meat. Grind pepper, lovage, oregano,

dill, dried onion, and fresh coriander; moisten with *garum*,

and mix with *garum* and wine. Put this in the pot, add oil,

and puncture [the meat] all over so that it absorbs the oil.

Cook over a low fire and serve.

Serves 4

4½ lb. (2 kg.) fresh peas in the shell

7 oz. (200 g.) pork rind or shoulder

7 oz. (200 g.) mild sausage

14 oz. (400 g.) pork ribs, individually separated

1 pig's foot (optional)

2 Tbs. olive oil

For the sauce:

1 tsp. each, lovage, oregano, anise, dried onion, and coriander

1 Tbs. *garum*

1 cup wine

salt and pepper to taste

Shell the peas, parboil them in salted water, and put aside. Boil the pork shoulder and cut into cubes. Cut the sausage into slices.

Prepare the sauce by mixing together the ingredients indicated above.

Then place the various pieces of pork in an earthenware (*cunam* = made of Cumaeian clay) pot with the sauce and the oil and

cook. When the meat is almost done, add the peas. Finish cooking, add

salt to taste, season generously with pepper, and serve.

Although here we have peas rather than the traditional cabbage, this mixture of various cuts of pork with vegetables is similar to the popular Milanese dish called *cassouela* or *botaggio*. Undoubtedly the cooking methods must also be similar. Those pork parts that require a longer cooking time should be boiled first; this way they lose much of their fat as well. The sausage and ribs, on the other hand, can be cooked directly in the pot. (For a discussion of Lucanian sausage, see page 13.)

UNUSUAL APPETIZERS

The following recipes further broaden this panorama of ancient appetizers by demonstrating the Roman attraction to culinary eccentricity.

ROSE PATINA

(APICIUS 136)

Patinam de rosis: Accipies rosas et exfoliabis, album tolles, mittes in mortarium, suffundes liquamen, fricabis. Postea mittes liquaminis ciatum unum semis et sucum per colum collabis. Accipies cerebellia IV, enerabis et teres pipéis scriptilos VIII, suffundes ex succo, fricabis. Postea ova VIIII frangis, vini ciatum unum semis et passi ciatum I, olei modicum. Postea patinam perunges et eam impones cineri calido, et sic impensam supra scriptam mittes. Cum cocta fuerit in termospodo, piperis pulvorem super asparges et inferes.

A *patina* of roses: Take roses and detach the petals, cut away the white part, put in a mortar, moisten with *garum*, and grind. Then add 1½ *cyathii* of *garum* and pass the sauce through a strainer. Take 4 brains, remove the membranes; grind 8 scruples of pepper, pour in the sauce, and grind. Then break 8 eggs with 1½ *cyathi* of wine and 1 *cyathus* of *passum*, and a bit of oil. Then oil a dish and place it in embers, and put in the mixture indicated above. When it is cooked in the *termospodo*, sprinkle with finely ground pepper and serve.

Serves 4

30 roses

1 tsp. *garum*

3 lamb brains

6 eggs

1 cup white wine

½ cup *passum*

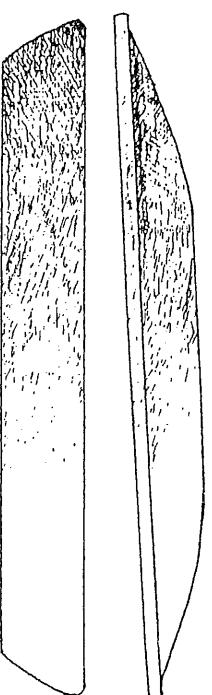
1 Tbs. olive oil

pepper to taste

Detach the petals from the roses and trim away the white part at the bottom. Grind the petals in a mortar, moistening with *garum*; then pass the mixture through a strainer.

Boil the lamb brains, then grind them in a mortar. Add the rose sauce and mix well. Then beat the eggs and mix them with the wine, *passum*, and olive oil. Pour into an ovenproof dish and bake at 350°F. until firm. Sprinkle with pepper before serving.

The *termospedio* or *testo* was a type of domed earthenware cover for a baking dish; embers could be placed over and under the dish thus covered, simulating a kind of oven on the hearth. For other recipes using this system, see pp. 163, 165–67, and 169 (dessert recipes from Cato).



APICIAN PATINA

(APICIUS 141)

Patinam Apicianam sic facies: Frusta saminis cocti, pulpas piscium, pulpas pulli, ficetulas vel pectori turdorum cocta et quaecumque optima fuerint, haec omnia concides diligenter praeter fisctulas. Ova vero cruda cum oleo dissolvis. Teres piper, ligusticum, suffundes liquamen, vinum, passum, et in caccabum mittis ut calefiat, et annulo obligas. Antea tamen pulpas concisas universas illuc mittes, et sic bulliat. At, ubi coctum fuerit, letabis cum ire suo et in patella alternis de trulla refundes cum piperis grana integra et nucleus pineis ita ut per singula coria subsierias diploides, dein lagnum similius. Quotquot lagana posueris, tot trullas impensae desuper adicies. Unum vero lagnum fistula percutes et super impones. Piper asperges. Ante tam illas pulpas ovis contractis obligabis et sic in caccabum mittes cum impensam. Patellam aeneam qualiter debes habere infra ostenditur.

Make an Apician *patina* thus: Pieces of cooked sow's paps, fish meat, chicken meat, fgeckers or cooked thrush breasts, and anything else that is good. Mince all these ingredients thoroughly, except the fgeckers. Beat raw eggs with oil. Grind pepper and lovage, and moisten with *garum*, wine, and *passum*; put into a pot to heat and thicken with starch. But first add the cut meats and bring to a boil. After it is cooked, remove [from the heat] with its juice and pour, one ladle at a time, in a pan, with peppercorns and pine nuts, so that every layer [of filling] has a sheet of pastry beneath and above. Alternate the pastry

with ladles of the filling. Pierce a final layer of pastry with a reed and place on top. Sprinkle with pepper. But first thicken the meat with eggs and put it in the pot with the filling. The proper bronze pan to use is shown below.

Serves 6

1¾ lb. (800 g.) mixed ground meat and fish (for example, 7 oz. [200 g.] of chicken, 3 oz. [100 g.] of liver, 7 oz. [200 g.] of brains and sweetbreads, and 10 oz. [300 g.] of fish)
4 eggs
1 Tbs. olive oil

pepper to taste
1 tsp. lovage
1 Tbs. *garum*

1 cup strong red wine

1 cup *passum*

peppercorns
3 oz. (100 g.) pine nuts

For the pastry:
2½ cups flour
sufficient water

2 Tbs. olive oil
pinch of salt

For the meat mixture: Pass the various meats twice through a meat grinder. If you use giblets (brains and sweetbreads are best) in place of sow's paps, boil them first for several minutes. Use any type of fresh fish you choose (for example, tuna, salmon, or cod), and chicken breasts.

For the sauce: Beat the eggs with the olive oil, add the ground pepper, lovage, and *garum*, and dilute with the wine and *passum*.

Put the meat mixture in a pan with the sauce and heat. It should remain fairly moist so that you can later complete the cooking process in the oven.

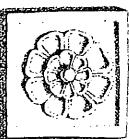
Add more wine if necessary.

For the pastry: Mix the flour, water, olive oil, and salt together; or prepare crepes if you prefer. In either case, try to form each layer of pastry or crepe in the same dimensions as those of the casserole.

Generously grease a casserole and begin to fill it, first with a layer of pastry and then the meat and sauce mixture, with 3 or 4 peppercorns and a bit of the pine nuts sprinkled over each time. Cover with a final layer of pastry and pierce its surface throughout with a fork. Cover with aluminum foil (so that the top layer of pastry does not burn) and bake at 400°F. for 20 minutes, then remove the foil and continue to bake for another 10 minutes.

Even though this recipe at first appears to be haphazardly put, it can be done with a bit of time and patience and is well worth the effort. Naturally, certain ingredients may require alternatives, such as the sow's paps and figpeckers; but remember that the recipe itself says to use any type of meat or fish you deem appropriate.

The last sentence of this recipe provides yet another interesting bit of information about the Apician manual, allowing us to deduce that it once contained illustrations to aid the reader.



This recipe is similar to the following Italian specialty:

REGIONAL ITALIAN RECIPE

(Marches)

Vincisgrassi

Boil brains, sweetbreads, and bone marrow for around 5 minutes. Chop chicken giblets, brain, marrow, sweetbreads, and ham or bacon. Mince onion and carrot and sauté them in butter and olive oil; when they are soft, add the chopped meat and cook, moistening from time to time with white wine. Dilute a bit of tomato concentrate (evidently a "recent" addition to the recipe) with stock and add to the meat. Salt and pepper to taste. While this mixture is cooking, prepare the pastry: this is a rustic style of pastry, made with flour, semolina, eggs, and sweet red wine (such as *vin santo* or marsala). The sheets of pastry should be of the same size and form as the baking dish.

Prepare a béchamel. Then begin to fill a buttered baking dish, starting with a layer of pastry, then a thick layer of meat, then the béchamel and grated Parmesan cheese. Repeat until all the ingredients are used.

Cover the dish with a cloth and let it rest for several hours so that the pastry has a chance to absorb the flavor of the filling. Then bake for 30 minutes in a hot oven (400°F.) and serve.

In Macerata, where this recipe originated, anecdote has it that the curious title *Vincisgrassi* is a bastardized Italian pronunciation of Windischgrätz. This Austrian general, who was active in Italy and other parts of the Austrian Empire during the period of the Napoleonic wars and the battles for Italian independence, reputedly was very fond of the dish.

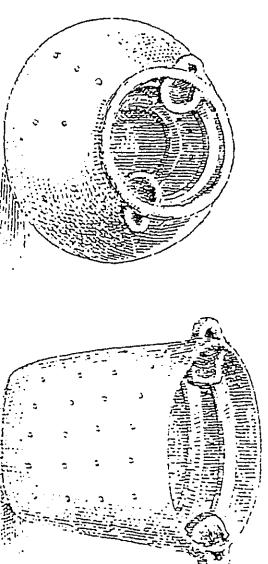
STUFFED DORMICE

(APICIUS 397)

Glires: Isicio porcino, item pulpis ex omni membro glirium trito, cum piperi, nuculis, lasere, liquamine farcies glires et sutos in tegula positos mittes in firmum aut farsos in clibanico coques.

Dormice: Stuff dormice with pork filling, and with the meat of whole dormice ground with pepper, pine nuts, silphium, and *garum*. Sew up, place on a baking tile, and put them in the oven; or cook the stuffed [dormice] in a pan.

This particular recipe was by no means the whim of an extravagant cook; dormice were in fact raised on large farms (called *glirarii*) in great quantity, like chicken and rabbits. Because dormice normally fatten up during the winter, while they sleep in the hollows of trees, the breeders would keep them in containers that simulated this natural environment. They consisted of jars with inner rims that spiraled from bottom to top, and holes all around so the animals could breathe. The dormice would nestle within, receiving their food (acorns, chestnuts, and walnuts) from the top opening, and fattening comfortably in the dark.



The historian Ammianus Marcellinus (*Rerum gestarum* 28, 4, 13) noted that the weight of these rodents was checked periodically, and that the fattest dormice were in greatest demand. In 115 B.C., the consul Marcus Aemilius Scaurus issued a sumptuary law (against extravagance and excessive spending) that attempted to prohibit the consumption of dormice, but it was ineffective.

The Apician manual and the *Cena Trimalchionis* (in which dormice were served roasted and covered with honey and poppy seeds) provide testimony that these animals were still popular in the first century A.D. In fact, it is curious that in Apicius there is only one recipe for them. The most common method of cooking dormice was, as in the above recipe, to roast them on a baking tile in the oven.

V

SOUPS AND PORRIDGES

CREAMED WHEAT
(CATO 86)

Graneam triticeam sic facito: Selibram tritici puri in mortarium purum indat, lauet bene, cornicenque deterat bene, eluatque bene. Postea in aulam inddet et aquam puram addat cocatque. Ubi coctum erit, lacte addat paulatim usque adeo, donec tremor crassus erit factus.

Make wheat porridge thus: One half *libra* of choice wheat is put in a clean mortar, washed well, dehusked well, and rinsed well. Then it is put in a pan, pure water is added, and it is cooked. When it is done, milk is added bit by bit, until it has become a thick cream.

Porridge

I can send you porridge; the rich man, *mulsum*.
If the rich man does not want to send it to you, buy it.

(Martial 13, 6)

Fava beans

If the pale fava bean boils in your red earthenware pot,
you may often refuse the dinners of the rich.

(Martial 13, 7)

Serves 4
10 oz. (300 g.) bulgur
1 quart (liter) water
1 quart (liter) milk
salt to taste

Bring the water to a boil and add the bulgur. When it is cooked (20–25 minutes), mix the milk in slowly and cook for another half hour. Salt to taste.

Obviously, it is no longer necessary to prepare the wheat for cooking, since it can already be purchased dehusked and ground as bulgur (a grind that provides a larger grain than does couscous).



MODERN LEBANESE RECIPE

Wheat Porridge

Place 2 pounds (1 kilo) of beef stew meat in 3 quarts (liters) of boiling water. Add 10 ounces (300 grams) bulgur and simmer for around 3 hours. Strain the mixture twice and serve the resulting porridge.

We have very few ancient recipes for soups and porridges, because our most prolific source, Apicius, is addressed to a rich and sophisticated public. However, we know that they were a nutritional mainstay for the masses, and that undoubtedly even the wealthy consumed them when they had no guests to impress. The abundance of grains, legumes, and vegetables undoubtedly encouraged the Romans to use them in their cooking. Peasant porridges made with barley, chick peas, lentils, and beans, and various vegetable soups can still be found steaming on tables from the Alps to the islands of Italy, many carrying names that clearly reflect their ancient origins (such as the spelt porridges from Umbria and Lazio). You can also concoct some soup for your Roman dinner that is inspired by, but not necessarily found in, the ancient sources, as long as you use only those ingredients that the Romans had at their disposal.

The following are a few of those ancient recipes we do have, along with several regional Italian and other Mediterranean recipes for comparison.

Spelt is still cultivated in Italy, especially in the mountainous zones of Lazio, Umbria, and Abruzzo, where spelt porridge remains popular. This is evidence of an uninterrupted tradition with its origins in the epoch of ancient Rome. Indeed, the Romans considered spelt (*farr*) the symbol of life itself. In the most ancient Roman matrimonial rite (*confarreatio*), the bride and groom would offer a spelt loaf to Capitoline Jove.

REGIONAL ITALIAN RECIPES

(Umbria; Lazio)

Spelt Porridge from Umbria

Take a ham bone with some meat remaining on it and boil in around 5 cups unsalted water for one hour (some people add vegetables, such as carrots, onions, and celery). Strain the broth into a clean pot. Bring to a boil, add 7 ounces (200 grams) of spelt, and mix. Continue to cook for 20–25 minutes. Remove the pieces of ham from the bone and add to the porridge before serving.

Spelt Porridge from Lazio

This recipe uses pork rind and jowl. The rind (not more than 3 ounces, or 80–100 grams) should be boiled for around 20 minutes, then cut into small pieces and placed in 1½ quarts (liters) of fresh water to boil again. The jowl should be finely chopped and fried together with a garlic clove and a pinch of aromatic herbs. Then add a minced onion and 1 small can of peeled tomatoes (obviously tomatoes entered the recipe at a later period). When this mixture is cooked, add the pork rind pieces with the broth. Then add 10 ounces (300 grams) of spelt and cook for another 20 minutes. Serve with grated pecorino cheese on the side.

PORRIDGE À LA JULIANUS

(APICIUS 179)

Pultes Iulianae sic coquuntur: Allicam purgatam infundis, coques, facies ut ferveat. Cum feruerit, oleum mittis; cum spissaverit, itas diligenter. Adicies cerebella duo cocta et sellam pulpare quasi ad esicia liatae, cum cerebellis teres et in caccabum mittis. Teres piper, ligusticum, fenniculi semen, suffundis liquamen et vinum modice, mittis in caccabum supra cerebella et pulpam. Ubi satis feruerit, cum iure misces. Ex hoc paulatim alicam condies, et ad trullam permisses et lisas ut quasi succus videatur.

Porridge à la Julianus is cooked thus: Soak cleaned spelt; bring it to a boil. When it boils add oil, and as it thickens carefully stir it smooth. Take two cooked brains and one half *libra* of meat, ground as though for parties, grind with the brains and put in a pot. Grind pepper, lovage, and fennel seeds, moisten with *garum* and a little wine, and put in the pot over the brains and meat. When this is sufficiently boiled, mix with broth. Season the spelt with this bit by

bit, mixing in by the ladleful, and stir it smooth until it is like a cream.

Serves 4

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| 2 lamb brains | 7 oz. (200 g.) ground lamb (or beef) |
| 1 Tbs. total, pepper, lovage, and fennel seeds | 1 Tbs. <i>garum</i> |
| 1 cup dry white wine | |

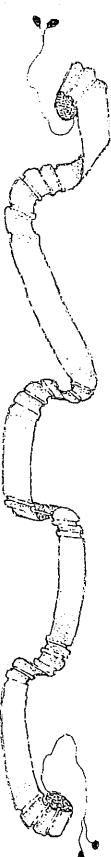
For the semolina:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 9 oz. (250 g.) durum semolina | |
| 2 Tbs. olive oil | |
| sufficient water | |

In all probability this recipe is best realized with a semolina of durum wheat, indicated by the provision that any eventual lumps should be eliminated while it is cooked. Its preparation is rather complicated but well worth the trouble.

Boil the lamb brains (a delicacy for the ancient Romans just as they still are for Arabs and Turks), mince them, and then mix them with the ground lamb meat. Place this mixture in a pot, and cover it with a condiment of pepper and ground herbs. Moisten with *garum* and wine. Cook over a low heat for approximately 10 minutes, mixing well. Prepare the semolina: Boil the water, add the semolina and olive oil, and cook. Add the meat slowly, one spoonful at a time, blending thoroughly. Continue to cook for 10 minutes. Serve.

We have no precise idea who the Julianus in the title for this *pultus* would have been. Two emperors, Didius Julianus (193) and Julian the Apostate (360–63), and a usurper Julian of Pannonia (284–85) all came later than Apicius. Both emperors were notoriously parsimonious. The *Historia Augusta* (*Julianus* 3) claims that, according to report, Didius Julianus “was so moderate in his ways . . . that he was content eating vegetables and legumes without meat.” This recipe was not, in any case, an economical dish but rather an extremely rich porridge. Today we would consider it a meal in itself.



SOUP WITH TRACTA AND MILK

(APICIUS 181)

*Pultes tractogalatae: Lactis sextarium et aquae modicum
tractae siccas et confringis et partibus in lac summittis. Ne-
uratur, aquam miscendo agitabis. Cum cocta fuerit, ut est
super ignem, mittis melle. Ex mustis cum lacte similiter
facies, saltem et oleum minus mittis.*

Porridge of *tracta* and milk: Put a *sextarius* of milk and a bit of water in a clean pot and bring to a boil over a low flame. Dry three rounds of *tracta* and break into pieces, and drop the pieces into the milk. Stir so that it does not burn, mixing with water. When it is cooked, add honey while the pan is still on the fire. You can make this same recipe using sweet buns with mustard, without adding salt and oil.

This is a simple recipe similar to the traditional milk soup that was once popular for the very old and very young; thus it seems unnecessary to add any explanation or list of ingredients.

The variation with sweet buns and mustard requires the prior preparation of these ingredients, for which the recipe is given in chapter 10 (Apicius 297) on page 158. From the final phrase we may deduce that a little salt and olive oil should be added to the first version, but not to the second.

BARLEY SOUP

(APICIUS 173)

- Serves 4
9 oz. (250 g.) barley
1 ham hock
1 onion
1 bouquet fresh dill (or 1 tsp. dried dill)
1 tsp. savory
1 cup olive oil

For the sauce to add to the cooked barley:
pinch of pepper
1 Tbs. total, lovage, pennyroyal, and cumin
1 Tbs. honey
1 Tbs. vinegar
1 Tbs. *defrutum*
1 Tbs. *garum*

*Tisanam sic facies: Tisanam lavando fricas, quam ante
diem infundes. Impones supra ignem calidum. Cum bul-
ligerit, mittes olei satis et areti modicum fasciculum, cepam
siccam, satureium et coloefum, ut ibi coquuntur propter
succum. Mittes coriandum viudem et saltem simul tritum
et facies ut ferveat. Cum bene feruerit, tolles fasciculum
et transferes in alterum caccabum tisanam sic ne fundum
tangat propter combustum. Lias et colas in caccabulo sa-
pra acronem coloefum. Teres piper, ligusticum, pulci aridi
modicum, cuminum et silificum, suffundis [meli], acetum,
defrumentum, liquamen, refundis in caccabum, sed coloefum
acronym ut bene tegatur. Facies ut ferveat super ignem
leuitum.*

Prepare barley soup thus: Crush washed barley that has been soaked the day before. Place over a high flame. When it boils, add a generous quantity of oil, a small bouquet of dill, dried onion, savory, and a ham hock, and let it cook until it becomes a cream. Add fresh coriander and salt that have been ground together, and bring to a boil. When it has boiled well, remove the bouquet and transfer the barley into another pot, so that it will not stick to the bottom or burn. Stir out the lumps and strain it into the pot over the ham hock. Grind pepper, lovage, a bit of dried pennyroyal, cumin, and roasted seseli; moisten with [honey], vinegar, *defrutum*, and *garum*, and pour in the pot, so that the ham hock is covered well. Bring to a boil over a low flame.



The recipe seems complicated at first, but it can be prepared in two stages. First the barley is boiled in water together with the herbs, the oil, and the ham hock until it becomes creamy; then the ham hock is transferred to a clean pot and the barley cream is poured over it through a strainer. In this way the herbs and any lumps are removed. In the second stage, a sauce is made of the pepper and remaining herbs, honey, vinegar, *defrutum*, and *garum*. When it is thoroughly blended, it is poured over the cream of barley to flavor it.

You can use pearl barley or ground barley. Because of the prolonged cooking time (a total of around 3 hours), either will produce a creamy texture.

BARLEY POLENTA

(PLINY, NATURALIS HISTORIA 18, 73)

Vicenis hordet libris ternas seminis lini et coriandri selenitram salisque acetabulum.

For each 20 *librae* of barley, 3 *librae* of linseeds and $\frac{1}{2}$ *libra* of coriander, in addition to an *acetabulum* of salt.

Serves 4
12 oz. (340 g.) ground barley
3 Tbs. linseeds
2 tsp. coriander
sufficient salt

Boil 1 quart (liter) of water, gradually add the ingredients, and leave to cook for approximately one hour. Add more boiling water if the barley consumes too much. A more flavorful polenta can be obtained by cooking the barley in meat stock or vegetable broth instead of water.

The practice of adding linseeds to food survives in several regional Italian specialties, such as one of the many variations of the Lombard *pam-méno* (millet bread) that is prepared for the feast of St. George (23 April).

VEGETABLE SOUP

(APICIUS 174)

Tisanam farricam: Infundis cicer, lenticulam, pisam. Defricas tisanam et cum leguminibus elicias. Ubi bene bullerit, olei satis mittis et super viridia concidis porrum, coriandrum, anetum, feniculum, betam, radbam, coliculum mollem; haec viridu minuta concisa in caccabum mittis. Coliculos elicias et teres feniculi semen satis, origanum, silf, ligusticum. Postquam triveris, liquamine temperabis et super legumina refundis et agites. Coliculorum minutis super concidis.

Farrica barley soup: Soak [dried] chick peas, lentils, and peas. Dehusk barley and boil with the legumes. When it has boiled well, add sufficient oil and over this chop these greens: leek, coriander, dill, fennel, beet, mallow, and tender young cabbage; put these finely chopped greens in the pot. Boil young cabbage and grind a generous amount of fennel seeds, oregano, silphium, and lovage. After you

have ground them, mix with *garum*, pour over the legumes, and stir. Over this add finely chopped young cabbage.

Serves 4–6
7 oz. (200 g.) each, dried lentils, chick peas, and peas
7 oz. (200 g.) barley
7 oz. (200 g.) beet greens
2 leeks
1 Tbs. total, coriander, dill, and fennel
½ cup olive oil
1 small savory cabbage or broccoli

For the sauce:
1 Tbs. total, fennel seeds, oregano, and lovage
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 Tbs. *garum*

This is a genuine minestrone, full of vegetables and legumes and further thickened by the addition of barley.

Soak the dried legumes for 24 hours; rinse and cook them along with the barley in salted water. After 3 hours, add the beet greens and leeks, cut into soup-size pieces, and the herbs. Then add the olive oil. On the side boil and chop the cabbage or broccoli, which should be added to the minestrone in the final half hour of cooking. Combine the sauce ingredients together and add only when the cooking is complete.

KALE SOUP

(APICIUS 70)

Betacios Varronis. Varro: "Betacios, sed nigros, quorum detersas radices et mulso decoctas cum sale modico et oleo vel sale, aqua et oleo in se coctas insculum facere et potari, melius etiam si in eo pullus sit decoctus."

Beets according to Varro. Varro: "[Use] beets, but black ones, whose roots have been cleaned, and cook in *mulsum* with a bit of salt and oil—or in salt, water, and oil—to make a broth to drink. It is even better if a chicken is cooked in it."

VII

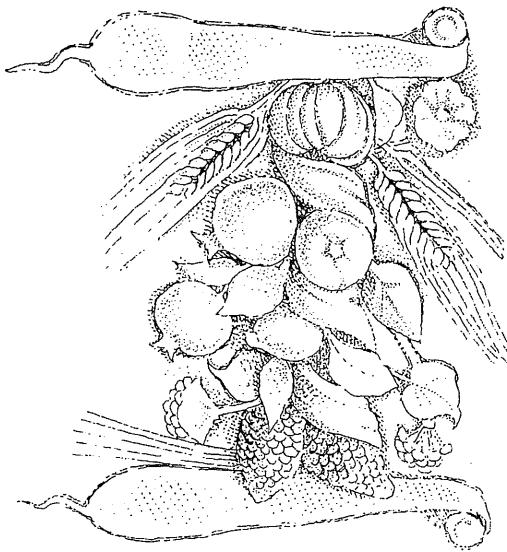
Serves 4
 ½ chicken (or better still, ½ stewing hen)
 1 bunch coarsely chopped kale or beet greens
 2–3 Tbs. olive oil
 salt to taste

2 cups *mulsum* (optional)

This broth is included in a group of digestive recipes, complete with the age-old suggestion to add a chicken to the pot if possible. You can first marinate the kale in *mulsum*, olive oil, and salt if you prefer.*

The attribution of this recipe to Marcus Terentius Varro (116–27 B.C.) is particularly interesting. It seems that someone using the Apician manual noted this recipe in the margin, whereupon it eventually became integrated into the text of later copies. Certainly it is fascinating to imagine that the habit of adding marginal annotations from other sources is a timeless one.

*For an alternative reading of this text, see André's translation and commentary—TRANS.



DOMESTIC MEAT AND

GAME

MENSA PRIMA

Hen
 There is no animal who furnishes more variety to the

Pig
 tongue:
 its meat provides nearly fifty flavors,
 but that of the other animals only one.

(Pliny the Elder, *Naturalis historia* 8, 209)

Hen
 The hen fattens readily on both sweet flour and darkness.
 Appetite is full of resources.

(Martial 13, 62)

Peacock
 You admire it whenever it spreads its feathers like
 sparkling gems;
 and then, cruel man, you can consign it to the heartless
 cook?

(Martial 13, 70)

Flamingo
 My pink feathers give me my name,
 but my tongue among gourmands gives me my fame.
 What would the tongue say if it could speak?

(Martial 13, 71)

The Apician manual contains a great many recipes based on meat from both domesticated and wild animals. This is not surprising, since it was largely directed to a rich and demanding public living in a period of unparalleled abundance and wealth in the history of Rome. The general predilection for extravagance, derived from the Greeks, had become part and par-

cel of Roman custom. Thus it is only logical that this manual would include all the various popular types of meat that made their way onto the dining tables of the epoch. Even bear, flamingo, and other unusual or exotic animals were slaughtered to satisfy the snobbery of rich hosts anxious to dazzle their guests.

Already during the last two centuries before Christ, meat began to appear with increasing frequency in the homes of Rome's wealthier citizens. Indeed, the demand reached such proportions that the Senate attempted to control the situation by issuing sumptuary laws limiting both the quantity and the types of meat served during banquets. But whenever a compliant host would follow these legal guidelines his guests were quick to complain. In a letter to his relatives, Cicero disappointedly wrote of attending a dinner that was almost completely vegetarian (*Epistulae ad familiares* 7, 26, 2).

The great generals of Republican Rome, Scipio Africanus, Metellus, and Caesar, were always careful to see that the troops were supplied with meat during their campaigns. There was free meat distribution to the populace beginning as early as 328 B.C. From Caesar and other Republican eminences up to the emperors of the fourth century, meat was given out on all sorts of occasions, including celebrating military victories or buying votes. It was virtually everyone's aspiration to have meat on his table, though generally the urban residents were more privileged in this regard. The rare vegetarian, perhaps an adherent to a particular philosophical (Neoplatonic) or religious (Manichaean) group, was viewed with suspicion.

Naturally, there were serious problems in keeping the meat fresh, since mechanical refrigeration was unavailable. It was salted, smoked, and even preserved in honey, and there were cured hams and various types of sausages.

All meat was sold at the *Forum boarium* and the *Forum suarum* (beef and pork markets) and in shops handling eggs and poultry. Pork was the most popular type of meat. There were large herds of pigs in Cisalpine Gaul that supplied meat for Rome, and additional hams were imported from Transalpine Gaul and modern-day Belgium.

A significantly smaller quantity of beef was consumed. There is only one recipe in Apicius for beef or veal, and three others for veal alone. Oxen were generally considered work animals and they were usually butchered only when they were old or sick. Because their meat was consequently rather tough, it was logical to prefer suckling pig, kid, or lamb. All types of farmyard animals were bred in great quantities.

The Romans also raised all birds that could be kept in captivity: chickens, geese, ducks, doves, wood pigeons, thrushes, and peacocks. Various systems of raising, feeding, and breeding for the best quality of meat

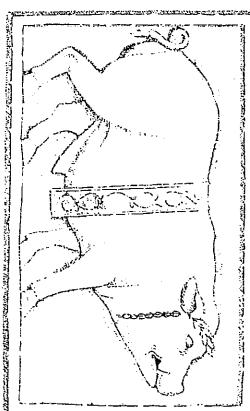
and, with regard to hens, egg-laying capacity, were painstakingly detailed by Columella in the eighth book of his treatise. Aquatic birds were raised in elaborate *nescotrophia* (from the Greek *nuxis* = swim and *trefo* = raise), complete with artificial ponds, reed beds, and small sheds for nesting. They were surrounded by walls that were very high (to prevent the birds from flying beyond them) and smooth (so that potential predators could not scale them).

The Romans also raised sheep and goats, mainly for the meat of their young, but sometimes for the adult meat as well. Finally, there was a wealth of game, since forests were far more plentiful on the Italian peninsula then than they are now. The infamous emperor Elagabalus (who emulated the most extravagant Apician inspirations and, according to the imaginative historian Lampridius, fed his dogs with goose liver and his horses with the highly prized grapes from Apamea of Phrygia) had an enormous number of wild sows slaughtered simply so that he could offer their paps and vulvas to his guests for ten consecutive days (*Historia Augusta, Heligabulus* 21).

Meat was oven-roasted, spit-roasted, used in patties, stuffings, and stews, or (in the case of kid and lamb, pork liver and paps, sausages and brochettes) cooked on a grill. Tripe and variety meats were used in delicate recipes or they became stuffing for fish and meats. Pig's blood was essential for blood sausage, while the feet, head, and rind were used for soups.

It is important to remember that because meat was relatively tough and frequently salted to prevent spoilage, it was often necessary to rinse it in milk and boil it once or twice before using it in a specific recipe. Naturally, when we encounter such instructions we can skip them because our meat is always available tender and fresh.

The following multifarious series of recipes is characterized by the use of a wide choice of condiments and many more aromatic herbs than appear in modern Italian cooking. There is also many a pleasant surprise to be found in the juxtaposition of sweet and sour ingredients. Finally, you will find unusual, delicate stuffing recipes for various fowl, hare, boar, and suckling pig.



In addition to the recipes in this chapter, there are suggestions for the serving of boiled, roasted, grilled, and baked meats within various sauce recipes in chapter 4.

ROASTED MEAT

(Apicius 268)

Assataram: Assam a furno simplicem salis plurimo con-spersam cum melle inferes.

Roasted meat: The meat is roasted plain in the oven, sprinkled generously with salt. Serve with honey.

This method of roasting gives a delicious flavor to any of various types of meat. Try it with beef, veal, pork, or lamb shanks. Take the piece of meat you have chosen and roll it generously in salt before placing it in the oven. Temperature and roasting times vary according to the type of meat and its weight. When it is done, remove from the oven and cover with around 2 tablespoons of liquid honey. Replace in the hot unlit oven for another 5 minutes, then slice and serve.

ROASTED MEAT WITH HERBS

(Apicius 269)

Altiter assaturas: Petroselini scripulos VI, laser scripulos VI, gingiberis scripulos VI, lauri bacis V, condimenti, la-eris radicem scripulos VI, origani scripulos VI, ciperis scripulos VI, costi modice, piretri scripulos III, apii seminis scripulos VI, piperis scripulos XII, liquamenis et olei quod sufficit.

Another way to roast meat: Six scruples of parsley, 6 scruples of siphium, 6 scruples of ginger, 5 bay berries, seasonings, 6 scruples of siphium root, 6 scruples of oregano, 6 scruples of cyperus, a bit of costusroot, 3 scruples of pyrethrum, 6 scruples of celery seeds, 12 scruples of pepper, sufficient *garum* and oil.

Serves 4

As a marinade:
2 Tbs. total, fresh minced parsley, oregano, mint, and chervil
1½ tsp. ginger

5 coarsely crushed bay berries
1½ tsp. celery seeds
1 Tbs. pepper
3 garlic cloves, pressed for their juice
1 Tbs. *garum*
2 Tbs. olive oil

As a baste:

2 large handfuls of fresh parsley
1 handful each of fresh oregano, thyme, and savory
1½ tsp. ginger
5 coarsely crushed bay berries
1½ tsp. celery seeds
1 Tbs. pepper
4 large garlic cloves, pressed for their juice
½ cup olive oil
½ cup *garum*

Today it is practically impossible to obtain all the ingredients listed in this recipe, whether the famous silphium, present as both a resin and a root; or the sweet tubers of cyperus or costusroot, a strong-smelling root that the Romans imported from distant India; or the African pyrethrum, no longer used in Western cuisine. Nonetheless, this roast can still be done with a few adjustments. The important thing is to use many herbs and spices, and naturally *garum*. The proportions given in the recipe (1 scruple is roughly equal to ½¹/₂ ounce [1.13 grams]) are appropriate for 2 pounds (1 kilo) of the meat of your choice.

It is possible to approach this recipe as either a marinade or a baste. Prepare the marinade with the ingredients listed above. Mix well and brush onto the meat you want to roast. Let sit for 2 hours before cooking. Oven temperature depends upon the type and weight of meat you use.

If you choose instead to prepare a baste: Mince the parsley, oregano, thyme, and savory. Add the remaining ingredients and mix well. Baste the roasting meat frequently (this also works well with pot roast).

STUFFED MEAT PATTIES

(Apicius 48)

Esicia omentata: Pulpm concisam teres cum medulla sili-ginei in vino infusi. Piper, liquamen, si velis, et bacam mir-team extenteratam simul conteres. Pusilla esicia formabis, intus nucleus et ppere positis. Involuta omento subassabis cum careno.

Ground meat patties in omentum: Grind chopped meat with the center of fine white bread that has been soaked in wine. Grind together pepper, *garum*, and pitted myrtle berries if desired. Form small patties, putting in pine nuts and pepper. Wrap in omentum and cook slowly in *caroenum*.

Serves 4

- $\frac{3}{4}$ lb. (400 g.) ground pork or beef
5 oz. (150 g.) white bread, crust removed
sufficient wine (to soak the bread)
pepper to taste
1 Tbs. *garum*
4–5 pitted myrtle berries
2 oz. (50 g.) pine nuts
1 cup *caroenum*
pork caul fat

This is one of the simplest and most flavorful Apician recipes to follow. Soak the bread in the wine, then add to the ground meat (pork if you want to remain close to the original flavor, otherwise you can use beef) in a mortar and grind together. Grind the pepper with the *garum* and the myrtle berries and add to the meat. Chop the pine nuts, then form the meat around them in small loaves so that they remain in the center like a filling. Wrap each loaf in caul fat, which will eventually cook away (soak the caul fat briefly in lukewarm water before use). Cook slowly in *caroenum*.

Within the section dedicated to recipes with ground meat, the Apician manual includes this curious rating: “The ground meat patties of peacock have first place, if they are fried so that they remain tender. Those of pheasant have second place, those of rabbit third, those of chicken fourth, and those of suckling pig fifth” (Apicius 54).

MEATBALLS WITH FAVA BEANS

(APICIUS 191)

Pisa sive faba: Ubi despumaverit, teres mel, liquamen, carenum, cuminum, rutum, apii semen, oleum et vinum. Tunclabis. Cum pipere trito et cum esciis inferes.

Peas or fava beans: When they have put out a froth, grind honey, *garum*, *caroenum*, cumin, rue, celery seeds, oil, and wine. Mix together. Serve with ground pepper and ground meat patties.

Serves 4

$\frac{3}{4}$ lb. (400 g.) ground meat (pork would be an appropriate choice)

For the sauce:

- 2 lb. (1 kg.) fresh unshelled fava beans or peas
1 cup red wine
1 Tbs. olive oil
1 Tbs. *garum*
1 Tbs. total, cumin, rue, and celery seeds
1 tsp. honey

Form small meatballs (the recipe does not describe how they are prepared, only that they are served together with the beans or peas). Shell and boil the beans or peas. When they put out a froth, drain them and put them in another pot together with the sauce made of the remaining ingredients. Cook slowly. When done, coarsely crush the beans or peas with a fork, then add the meatballs to this sauce and cook for another 15–20 minutes.

The following delicate fava bean sauce remains a favorite in the city of San Remo:

REGIONAL ITALIAN RECIPE

(Liguria)
Marò

Take fresh, tender fava beans and grind them in a mortar together with a bit of garlic and a few mint leaves. Then add grated pecorino cheese and olive oil. Grind further so that all the ingredients blend together. Serve with boiled or roasted meat.

VEAL OR BEEF STEW

(APICIUS 354)

Vitulinam sive bubulam cum porris [vel] cidoneis vel cepis vel colocaseis: Liquamen, piper, laser et olei modicum.

Veal or beef with leeks [or] quinces or onions or colocasia: *Garum*, pepper, siphium, and a bit of oil.

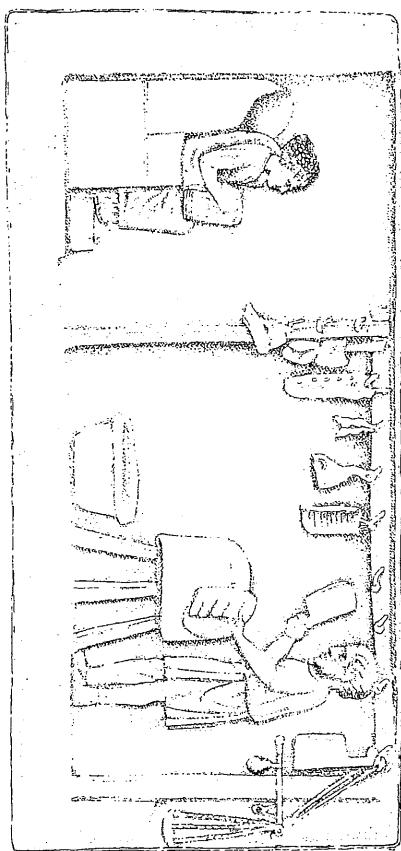
This is the only recipe in Apicius that calls for beef. As is often the case in *De re coquinaria*, the principal ingredients are cited in the title, but the text contains the ingredients for the condiment alone.

Brown the diced stew meat in a bit of olive oil. Add the fruit or vegetable you have chosen (cut into pieces), a tablespoon of *garum*, and the juice of 2 garlic cloves in place of the silphium.

Colocasia is a type of tuber, a sweet potato equivalent to the taro, or Chinese potato, consumed in the Orient. We can use the tubers of topinambours (Jerusalem artichokes), which came originally from America.

If you wish to use quinces in the recipe, you should first boil them for around 20 minutes, peel them, and then cut them into pieces before adding them to the meat.

Quantities and cooking times are those for a normal stew.



VEAL SCALOPPINE

(APICIUS 353)

Vitellina fricta: *Piper, ligusticum, apii semen, cuminum, origanum, cepam siccam, uam passam, mel, acetum, vimum, liquamen, oleum, defrutum.*

Fried veal: Pepper, lovage, celery seeds, cumin, oregano, dried onion, raisins, honey, vinegar, wine, *garum*, oil, and *defrutum*.

1 Tbs. raisins, plumped in wine

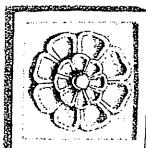
1 Tbs. dried onion

1 Tbs. total, lovage, celery seeds, cumin, and oregano

pinch of pepper
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. honey
 1 Tbs. *defrutum*
 1 Tbs. olive oil
 1 Tbs. wine
 1 tsp. *garum*

The veal scaloppine are cooked in the sauce consisting of the ingredients listed above. Mix the raisins with the dried onion, mixed herbs, pepper, and honey in a bowl, gradually adding the *defrutum*, olive oil, wine, and *garum*.

Heat this sauce in a pan, then add the veal to cook. Quantities and cooking time are the same as those for veal scaloppine with marsala.



PORK STEW WITH APPLES

(APICIUS 168)

Minutum Matianum: *Adicies in caccabum oleum, liquamen, cocturam, concides porrum, coriandrum, esicia minuta, Spatulam porcinam coctam tessellatum concides cum sua sibi tergilla. Facies ut simul coquantur. Media coctura mala Matiana purgata intrinsecus, concisa tessellatum mittes. Dum coquitus, teres piper, cuminum, coriandrum viridem vel semen, mentam, laseris radicem, suffundes acerum, mel, liquamen, defrutum modice et ius de suo sibi, aceto modico temperabis. Facies ut ferveat. Cum ferbuerit, tracham confringes et ex ea obligas, piper asperges et inferes.*

Fricassae à la Matius: In a pot put oil, *garum*, broth, chopped leeks, coriander, and small meat patties. Dice cooked pork shoulder with its rind. Cook everything together. When this is half-cooked, put in Matian apples that have been cored and cut into pieces. During the cooking, grind pepper, cumin, fresh coriander or coriander seeds, mint, and silphium root; pour in vinegar, honey, *garum*, a bit of *defrutum*, and cooking broth. Mix with a bit of vinegar. Bring to a boil. When it has boiled, break in pieces of *tracata* and thicken, sprinkle with pepper, and serve.

Serves 4–6

1 lb. ($\frac{1}{2}$ kg.) pork (or pressed ham)
 $\frac{3}{4}$ lb. (400 g.) ground meat

1 Tbs. olive oil

1 Tbs. *garum*

2 leeks, chopped

1 Tbs. minced fresh coriander

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup stock

1 lb. ($\frac{1}{2}$ kg.) cooking apples, cored and cut

For the sauce:

1 tsp. pepper

1 Tbs. total, cumin, coriander, and mint

1 garlic clove, pressed for its juice

1 Tbs. vinegar

1 tsp. honey

1 tsp. *garum*

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup *defrutum*

sufficient stock

1 Tbs. flour

This stew recipe is very good, an ancient relative of the German recipes for pork with apples.

You can use raw pork or pressed ham. If you use the latter, the cooking time should be greatly reduced. But if you follow the original recipe, you must first boil or roast the pork and then dice it as for a normal stew. The ground meat should be formed into small meatballs.

Heat the olive oil in a casserole, then add the *garum*, leeks, and coriander. Add the diced pork and the meatballs, letting it cook a while to flavor the meat, then moisten with a bit of stock and continue to cook. When the meat is half done, add the apple pieces. Shortly before the cooking time is complete, add the sauce composed of the first eight sauce ingredients listed above, and thicken with flour (replacing the *tracta* in the recipe: see the Glossary).

The recipe is attributed to Gaius Matius, a friend of Julius Caesar. Columella (12, 46, 1) wrote that he exercised consummate diligence in collecting recipes suitable for public dinners and banquets, and that he published three books entitled *Coci* (cooks), *Cetarii* (preparers of fish), and *Salgamarii* (preparers of preserves). Matius also gave his name to a type of apple, which Columella (5, 10, 19) considered very good and recommended cultivating.

PORK STEW WITH CITRON

(APICIUS 169)

Minutal dulce ex citriis: Adicies in caccabo oleum, liquamen, cocturam, porrum captiatum, concides coriandrum minutatim, spatulam porcinaam coctam, esiciola minuta. Duri coquittur, teres piper, cuminum, coriandum vel semen, rutam viridem, laseric radicem, suffundis acerum, defrumentum, ius de suo sibi, acetio temperabis. Facies ut ferueat. Cum feruerit, citrium purgatum intro foras, tessellatum concisum et elixatum in caccabo mittes. Tractam confinges et ex ea obligas, piper aspergis et inferes.

Sweet stew with citrons: In a pot put oil, *garum*, broth, head of leek; finely chop coriander, cooked pork shoulder, small meat patties. While this is cooking, grind pepper, cumin, coriander or coriander seeds, fresh rue, sulphur root; pour on vinegar, *defrumentum*, cooking broth, mix with vinegar. Bring to a boil. When it boils, put into the pot citron that have been cleaned inside and out, diced, and boiled. Break in *tracta* and thicken, sprinkle with pepper, and serve.

Serves 4–6

1 lb. ($\frac{1}{2}$ kg.) pork shoulder
 $\frac{3}{4}$ lb. (400 g.) ground meat, formed into small meatballs

1 Tbs. olive oil

1 Tbs. *garum*

2 leeks, chopped

1 bunch fresh coriander, minced

1 tsp. pepper

1 tsp. total, cumin and rue

2 Tbs. *sapa*

2 citrons

1 tsp. cornstarch

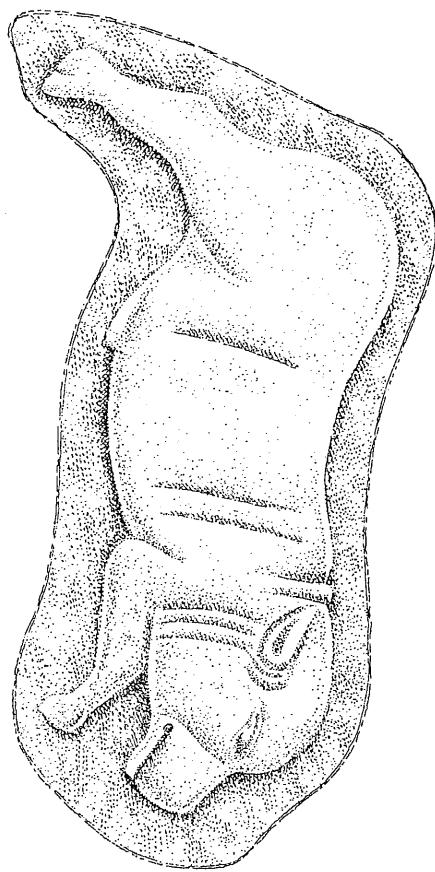
1 tsp. honey or sugar (optional)

This stew is very good, but one adjustment must be made: since, despite its name, it is not at all sweet but actually rather sour, most modern palates would probably prefer that the vinegar be completely omitted and that the acidity of the citrons be corrected with a bit of sugar or honey.

Boil the pork shoulder, cut into cubes, and set aside. In a casserole heat the olive oil and sauté the *garum*, leeks, and coriander. Then add the pork shoulder and the meatballs. Prepare a sauce with the pepper, herbs, and

sappa, and add it to the cooking meat.

Peel the citrons, cut them into quarters, and then boil them for around 10 minutes in water. Add them to the meat and finish cooking. Thicken with a bit of dissolved cornstarch or crumbled bread, which replaces the *tracta* in the recipe (see the Glossary). Adjust the acidity if necessary with honey or sugar. Sprinkle with pepper and serve.



HAM IN PASTRY

(APICIUS 290)

Pernam, ubi eam cum caricis plamimis elixaveris et tribus lauri foliis, detracta cune tessellatum incidis et melle complobis. Deinde farinam oleo subactam convexes et ei cornuum redditis et, cum farina cocta fuerit, eximas furno ut est, et inferes.

After you have cooked the ham in water with many dried figs and three bay leaves, remove the skin, make reticulated incisions, and fill them with honey. Then work together flour and oil and replace the skin [with this pastry]. When the pastry is cooked, remove from the oven as it is and serve.

Serves 4
2–3 lb. (1–1½ kg.) boned ham
½ lb. (225 g.) dried figs

3 bay leaves
3 Tbs. honey
3½ cups flour
olive oil (sufficient for a moist pastry)
1 Tbs. salt

Boil the ham in water containing the dried figs and bay leaves. When it is done (approximately 2 hours cooking time), remove the skin, score the ham in a crosshatched pattern, and spread it with honey.

Make a sheet of pastry from the flour, oil, and salt. Wrap the ham in it, forming a new "skin," as the recipe says, and bake in the oven at 400°F. for around 30 minutes. When the pastry is cooked, remove from the oven and serve.

You may prefer to use a small vacuum-packed, pre-cooked ham. Score it as above, insert pieces of dried figs that have been plumped in a bit of *passum* or *defrutum*, and spread it with honey. You may also insert a few pieces of *mustacei*, or biscuits made with must (see Cato 121, p. 157); this variation can be found in Apicius 291. Wrap the ham in the pastry and bake as above.

This recipe is also good cold, so it is certainly no tragedy if you find yourself with leftovers for the next day.

STUFFED SUCKLING PIG

(APICIUS 367)

Porcellum farsilem duobus generibus: Curas, a gutture extenteras, a cervice ornas. Antequam praedures, subaperties auriculam sub cutem, mittes impensam Terentianam in vesicam bubulam et fistolam aviarri rostro vesice alligabis per quam exprimes in auren quantum ceperit. Postea carta praecedes et infiblabis et praeparabis aliam impensam. Sic facies: teres piper, ligusticum, origanum, laseris radicem modicum, suffundes liquamen, adicies cerebella coctas, ova cruda, alicam coctam, ius de suo stbi, [si] fuerit, auellas, nucleus, piper integrum, liquamine temperas. Imples porcellum, carta obturas et fibulas, mittes in furnum. Cum coccus fuerit, exornas, perunges et inferes.

Suckling pig with two types of stuffing: Clean it, gut it from the throat, truss [the feet] to the neck. Before cooking it, open the ear under the skin. Fill an ox bladder with Terentian stuffing, and attach a bird's quill at the neck of the bladder; through this squeeze as much [stuffing] into

the ear as it will hold. Then plug the hole with paper and close with fibulas, and prepare another stuffing. Make it thus: Grind pepper, lovage, oregano, a bit of silphium root; moisten with *garum*; add cooked brains, raw eggs, cooked spelt, cooking broth, small birds if available, pine nuts, peppercorns. Mix with *garum*. Stuff the pig, plug with paper, and close with fibulas. Place in the oven. When it is cooked, untruss, spread with oil, and serve.

For most of us it is impossible to prepare an entire suckling pig at home, unless a large spit is available. Otherwise, you might use the occasion of a catered banquet to request that this recipe be prepared for you.

The first stuffing mentioned in the recipe (Terentian stuffing: see Stuffed Leg of Boar à la Terentius, Apicius 339, pp. 117-18) is actually more of a sauce, consisting of pepper, bay berries, rue, silphium (we can use garlic juice instead), *garum*, *carioenum*, and olive oil. The Romans devised the sack described in the recipe to inject this stuffing into the animal through an incision in the ear. The main stuffing is made of boiled brain, mixed with raw egg, stock, pine nuts, the meat of small fowl, semolina, various herbs, pepper, garlic juice (again in substitution of silphium), and *garum*.

Quantities depend upon the size of the pig. For a buffet serving 12 people, a pig of around 15 pounds (6-7 kilos), should be prepared as a main course. If your guests like pork, you might also prepare the preceding Ham in Pastry (Apicius, 290). Otherwise the following recipe for lamb or kid makes an appropriate accompaniment.

The Romans frequently cooked entire pigs or hogs, often stuffed, when they had numerous guests to serve (this custom survives in central Italy). A recipe called *porcus troianus* dates from the second century B.C.: it was so named because the pig "was stuffed with other animals that were closed inside in the same manner that the Trojan horse was filled with warriors" (Macrobius, *Saturnalia* 3, 13). Another description of this spectacular dish for gala banquets appears in the *Cena Trimalchionis* (see page 203). The Italian word *troia*, or sow, is a colorful descendent of the name of this recipe.

ROASTED LAMB OR KID

(Apicius 363)

Haedus sive agnus crudus: Oleo, pipere fricabis et asperges foris salem purum multo cum coriandri semine. In furnum mitis, assatum inferes.

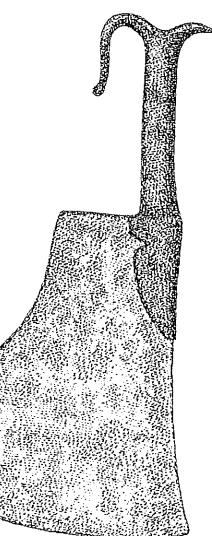
For raw kid or lamb: Rub it with oil and pepper and sprinkle the surface with pure salt and a good quantity of coriander seeds. Place in the oven, serve when roasted.

This simple recipe can be used not only for whole lamb or kid, but also for parts of these animals, a more practical option for most situations. I recommend using fresh coriander instead of the seeds for its delicate perfume.

If you use the whole beast, clean it well, gut it, then slit the skin in various places and insert the coriander, salt, and pepper beneath. Grind a generous amount of coarse salt, press the meat in it to cover the surface, then bake in the oven or roast on a spit.

You can prepare a leg of approximately 2 pounds (1 kilo) (which serves 4), following the same procedure for preparation and baking it in the oven. One hour in a hot oven (400°F.) is sufficient. For juicier meat, bake it at 480°F. for the first 15 minutes, then lower the heat.

Keep in mind that ample coriander is needed to flavor the meat sufficiently. If you cannot find it fresh, be sure to mix the dry variety with olive oil so that it is easier to apply.



PARTHIAN KID OR LAMB

(Apicius 365)

Haedum sive agnum particum: Mittes in furnum. Teres pipere, rutam, cepam, satureiam, damascena enucleata, laseris modicam, viuum, liquamen et oleum. Ferrens collutitur in disco, ex aceto sumuntur.

Parthian kid or lamb: Put in the oven. Grind pepper, rue, onion, savory, pitted damsons, a bit of silphium, wine, *garum*, and oil. When [the sauce] is hot, it is poured [over the meat] on a round dish, and it is served with vinegar.

Serves 4–6

1 leg of lamb or kid (approximately 2–3 lb. [1–1½ kg.])
10 oz. (300 g.) pitted prunes (plumped in warm water)

3–4 large onions

1 tsp. *garum*

2 Tbs. olive oil

1 Tbs. total, rue and savory

pepper to taste

1 garlic clove, pressed for its juice

Roast a leg (or other appropriate cut) of lamb or kid without any condiment. Meanwhile, prepare the sauce: finely slice the onions and sauté in the olive oil and *garum*. Season with the pepper and herbs, and cook for around 15 minutes more. Add the prunes and a few drops of garlic juice. Continue to cook the sauce until the fruit has nearly disintegrated.

Remove the meat from the oven, moisten it with a bit of vinegar (which takes away the excess fat), and dry. Cover with the sauce, replace in the oven for another 10 minutes, then remove and serve.

If you want to simplify things when serving, slice the meat before you cover it with the sauce.

As I interpret the text, the name of this delicious sweet-and-sour recipe comes from the *laser partibicum* used to flavor it (for a more complete discussion of this herb, see pp. 30–31). Others have read *pasticum* instead of *particum*, thus “suckling kid or lamb”; this corresponds to the modern Roman *abbacchio*, the meat of a lamb that has been nourished exclusively with its mother’s milk. But whatever the interpretation, the recipe itself is certainly worth trying.

GRILLED LIVER

(APICIUS 2.61)

A liver: Ficatum praecidis ad cannam, infundis in liquamine, [teres] piper, ligusticum, bacca lauri duas, involves in omento et in craticula assas et inferes.

Another recipe: Cut the liver with a reed, and soak it in *garum*. [Grind] pepper, lovage, and two bay berries. Wrap in omentum, roast on a grill, and serve.

Serves 4

¾ lb. (400 g.) thickly sliced liver (either pork or veal)
2–3 Tbs. *garum*

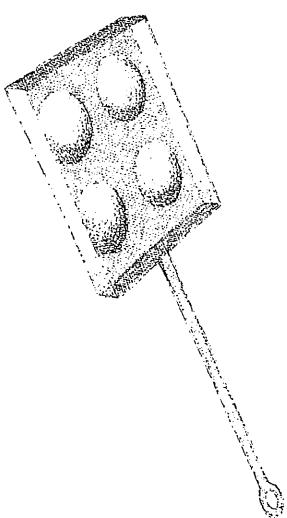
pepper to taste

2–3 bay berries

pork cauflat

Here liver is called *ficatum* and not *recur* as in other recipes, an allusion to the liver of an animal that had been nourished on figs (see page 13). For our purposes either pork or veal liver works well.

Score the slices of liver with a knife and marinate them in *garum*. After 2 or 3 hours, remove the liver and season with the ground mixture of pepper, lovage, and bay berries. Then wrap in cauflat (see p. 90) and roast on a grill for around 10 minutes, turning the liver occasionally.



LIVER PATTIES

(APICIUS 4.5)

*Omentata ita fum: Assas iecur porcium et eum enerwas.
Ante tamen teres piper, rutam, liquamen, et sic suberimmit-
tis iecur et teres et misces, scit pulpa omentata, et singula
involutur folia lauri et ad fumum suspenduntur quam-
diu voles. Cum manducare volueris, tolles de fumum et
denuo assas.*

Patties in omentum are made thus: Roast pork liver and remove the veins and tissues. First grind pepper, rue, and *garum*, and put the liver in over this and grind and mix, as for ground meat in omentum. Wrap each [patty] in bay leaves, and hang to smoke for as long as desired. When you want to eat them, remove from the smoke and roast again.

Serves 4

- 1 lb. ($\frac{1}{2}$ kg.) pork liver
- pepper to taste
- 1 tsp. rue
- 1 Tbs. *garum*
- 1–2 bay leaves per meat patty
- pork caul fat

Cook the pork liver on a grill for around 10 minutes. Grind pepper, rue, and *garum* in a mortar, then add the liver and grind together. Mix thoroughly and form small patties. Wrap each one in bay leaves, then in the caul fat (see p. 90), and cook on a grill or in the oven at 400°F. for 10–15 minutes.

This method of cooking with bay leaves and pork caul fat is identical to that used in the following northern Italian recipe:

REGIONAL ITALIAN RECIPE
(Trieste)

Pork Liver, Trieste Style

Have the pork liver sliced not too thick. Place a bay leaf on each slice, then season with salt and pepper. Fold in half and wrap in pork caul fat. Place in a shallow pan, moisten with a cup of white wine, and bake at 325°F. for 20–30 minutes.

CHICKEN WITH SQUASH

(*Apicius* 80)

Cucurbitas cum gallina: *Duracina, tubera, piper, careum, curinum, siffl, condimenta viridia, mentam, apium, coriandrum, puleum, careotam, mel, vimum, liquamen, oleum et acetum.*

Squash with hen: Peaches, truffles, pepper, caraway, cumin, siphium, fresh condiments, mint, celery, coriander, pen-nyroyal, dates, honey, wine, *garum*, oil, and vinegar.

Serves 4

- 1 medium cleaned and gutted young stewing hen or chicken
(around 2 lb. [1 kg.])
- 1½ lb. (700 g.) squash
- 1 Tbs. olive oil
- 1 Tbs. wine

1 tsp. *garum*
pepper to taste
For the sauce:
4 peaches
7–8 dates
1–2 black truffles
fresh aromatic herbs, minced, to taste

1 cup white wine
1 Tbs. olive oil
1 tsp. *garum*
1 tsp. honey
dash of vinegar

As often happens in *De re coquinaria*, the recipe proper ignores the main ingredient, which appears only in the title. Perhaps for a reader of the ep-och the missing procedures were obvious enough, but for us this is not necessarily the case. The following is one possible interpretation.

Cut the hen or chicken into pieces and cook for approximately 20 minutes in a pot with a bit of olive oil and wine. Meanwhile, clean the squash and dice. Add the squash to the chicken and continue to cook over a low heat until the squash has become completely soft. Flavor with *garum* and pepper.

For the sauce: Peel and cut the peaches into pieces, pit and chop the dates, and chop the truffles. Mix these ingredients together with the herbs, white wine, olive oil, *garum*, honey, and vinegar. Serve this sauce as an accompaniment to the cooked fowl.

STUFFED CHICKEN

(*Apicius* 250)

Pullus farsilis: *Pullum sicuti liquaminatum a cervice expeditis. Teres piper, ligusticum, gingiber, pulpan caesam, alicam elixam, teres cerebellum ex ture coctum, ova commixta et commiscis ut unum corpus efficiat; liquamine temperas et oleum modice mittis, piper integrum, nucleos abundantes. Fac impensam et imples pullum vel porcellum ita ut laxamentum habeat. Similiter in capo facies, ossibus erectis coques.*

Stuffed chicken: Gut the chicken from the neck, as for chicken with *garum* sauce. Grind pepper, lovage, ginger, ground meat, boiled spelt, brain cooked in broth. Break eggs and add, mixing everything to a uniform consistency.

Mix with *garum* and put in a bit of oil, peppercorns, abundant pine nuts. Make a stuffing [of these ingredients] and fill the chicken or a suckling pig, leaving some space. Use the same procedure with a capon, boning it before cooking it.

Serves 4

1 medium cleaned and gutted chicken (around 2 lb. [1 kg.])

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup couscous

7 oz. (200 g.) brain (lamb or veal)

1½ quarts (liters) stock (to completely cover the chicken)

pepper to taste

1 tsp. ginger

1 tsp. lovage

7 oz. (200 g.) cooked ground meat of your choice

2 oz. (50–60 g.) pine nuts

2 eggs

1 Tbs. *garum*

1 Tbs. olive oil

Soak the couscous for 30 minutes, drain, and boil in water. Boil the brain in a bit of stock. Grind the cooked couscous and brain in a mortar, seasoning with the pepper, ginger, and lovage.

Place this mixture in a bowl, then grind the pine nuts together with the ground meat in the mortar. Add to the brain and couscous.

Beat the eggs and blend them into the mixture; season with *garum* and a bit of olive oil. Use this to stuff the chicken, being careful not to overfill. Sew it shut and cook in boiling water or stock.

For best results, you should enclose the stuffed chicken in a pork bladder before cooking. This system (recommended by the great French cook Boucuse for his chicken stuffed with greens) is the best for cooking chicken, capon, or other stuffed fowl in water or broth because it helps to seal in the flavor. Cooking time for a medium chicken is 90 minutes; the liquid should never reach a fast boil.

This recipe is also good with boned capon. Increase the quantities in proportion to the weight of the bird.

CHICKEN À LA FRONTO

(Apicius 248)



Serves 4

1 medium cleaned and gutted chicken (around 2 lb. [1 kg.])

1 small bunch each, fresh dill, savory, and coriander (or lemon balm)

4 small tender leeks

2 Tbs. olive oil

1 tsp. *garum*

2 Tbs. *defrutum*

pepper to taste

Bundle together the dill, savory, coriander, and leeks into a bouquet that will not come apart when it is cooked. Brown the chicken, either whole or cut into pieces, without any oil or seasoning. Mix the *garum* with the olive oil, then add to the chicken with the bouquet of herbs and leeks. Continue to cook over a low heat. If you are cooking the chicken in pieces, the total time needed should be 45–50 minutes; if it is whole, add 15–20 minutes more. Arrange on a serving dish, pour on the *defrutum*, and sprinkle with pepper.

“À la Fronto” in this title is apparently a reference to the Roman author of a lost treatise on agriculture.

CHICKEN À LA ELAGABALUS

(APICIUS 247)

Pullus Variianus: Pullum coques iure hoc: liquamine, oleo, vino, [cui mittis] fasciculum porri, coriandri, saturniae. Cum coctus fuerit, teres piper, nucleos ciatos duos et ius de suo sibi suffundis (et fasciculos proicies), lac temperas. Et reexinanies mortarium supra pullum, ut ferreat. Obligas eundem albamentis ovorum tritis, ponis in lance et iure super scripto perfundis. Hoc nus candidum appellatur.

Chicken à la Varius: Cook the chicken in this sauce: *garum*, oil, wine, [to which you add] a bouquet of leek, coriander, savory. When it is cooked, grind pepper, two *cyathi* of pine nuts, moisten with cooking juice (and remove the bouquet of herbs), and mix with milk. Empty the mortar over the chicken, bring to a boil. Thicken with minced [boiled] egg white. Place on a serving dish and pour over it the sauce described above. This is called white sauce.

1 medium cleaned and gutted chicken (around 2 lb. [1 kg.]), cut into pieces

4 small tender leeks

1 bunch each, fresh coriander (or lemon balm) and savory

2 cups white wine

1 Tbs. olive oil

1 tsp. *garum*

For the sauce:

ample white pepper

3 oz. (100 g.) pine nuts

1 cup milk

3 hard-boiled egg whites, minced

1 tsp. cornstarch (if necessary)

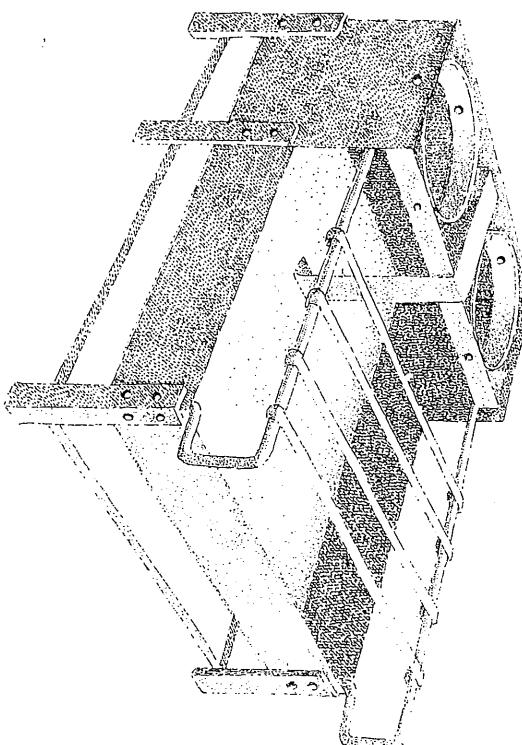
GUINEA HEN WITH SWEET-AND-SOUR SAUCE

(APICIUS 240)

Pullum numidicum: Pullum curas, elicas, levas, laser ac pipper [aspergis] et assas. Teres piper, cuminum, coriandri semen, laseris radicem, rutam, caretam, nucleos, suffundis acetum, mel, liquamen et oleum, temperabis. Cum fermentis, amulo obligas, pullum perfundis, piper aspergis et inferes.

Guinea fowl! Prepare a chicken, boil it, and remove it [from the water]. [Sprinkle with] siphium and pepper, and roast. Grind pepper, cumin, coriander seeds, siphium root, rue, dates, pine nuts; pour on vinegar, honey, *garum*, and oil, and mix. When it has boiled, thicken with starch and pour over the chicken; sprinkle with pepper and serve.

This light, delicate recipe is generally attributed to the emperor Elagabalus (reigned 218–222). Inspired by his devotion to the sun god Elagabalus (of whom he had become a high priest while still a youth), he adopted the name we know him by today; his original name was Varius Avitus Bassianus.



Serves 4

1 guinea hen

pepper to taste

1 garlic clove, pressed for its juice

For the sauce:

2 oz. (50–60 g.) pine nuts

10 pitted dates

pepper to taste

1 Tbs. total, cumin, coriander seeds, and rue

2 Tbs. olive oil

1 garlic clove, pressed for its juice

1 tsp. vinegar

1 tsp. honey

1 tsp. cornstarch (if necessary)

Today we can skip the initial boiling because our meat is available fresh (see the discussion on page 87). Gut and clean the guinea hen, sprinkle with pepper and garlic juice, and roast. Meanwhile, prepare the sauce: Grind the dry ingredients together, moistening while you grind with the liquid ones. Heat in a small pan. When this sauce boils, add the dissolved starch if necessary to thicken. You can either serve the sauce apart or cut the hen into pieces and cover it with the sauce.

The guinea hen (*gallina numidica* or *africana*), which was introduced from Africa, appeared on the Roman table perhaps only after Carthage was taken (146 B.C.). In one of Martial's clever epigrams (13, 73) he described Hannibal, having had his fill of Roman geese but unable to enjoy the birds of his own region during his campaigns in Italy against the Romans.

BOILED GOOSE À LA APICIUS

(Apicius 235)

Anserem elixum calidum ex iure frigido Apiciano: Teres piper, ligusticum, coriandri semen, mentam, rutam, refin-dis liquamen et oleum modice, temperas. Anserem elixum ferventem sabano mundo exsiccabis, ius perfundis et inferes.

Hot boiled goose with cold sauce à la Apicius: Grind pepper, lovage, coriander seeds, mint, and rue; pour on *garum* feres.

and a bit of oil, and mix. Dry the steaming boiled goose with a clean cloth, pour the sauce over it, and serve.

Boil the goose, skimming the surface of the liquid occasionally to remove the fat. Meanwhile, prepare the sauce with the pepper, herbs, *garum*, and a bit of olive oil. When the goose is ready, wipe the fat from it with a paper or cloth towel, cut it into pieces, and cover it with the sauce.

Cooking time depends upon the weight of the goose. Since most geese weigh at least 4½ pounds (2 kilos), this recipe will serve a minimum of 6.

DUCK IN PRUNE SAUCE

(Apicius 213)

In grue vel in amare vel in pullo: Piper, cepam siccarn, ligusticum, cuminum, apii semen, pruna Damascena eru-ques.

For crane or duck or chicken: Pepper, dried onion, lovage, cumin, celery seeds, pitted damsons, *mulsum*, vinegar, *garum*, *defrutum*, and oil, and cook.

Serves 4

1 large duck, cleaned and gutted

1 Tbs. olive oil

1 tsp. *garum*

2 Tbs. *defrutum*

2 Tbs. dried onion

1 tsp. each, lovage, cumin, and celery seeds

pepper to taste

1 cup *mulsum*

10 oz. (300 g.) pitted prunes

1 Tbs. vinegar

Cut the duck into pieces (you can also cook it whole if you prefer). Brown in the olive oil, *garum*, and *defrutum*. Add the onion, herbs, pepper, and *mulsum*, and cook. When the duck is half done, add the prunes. If the sauce is a bit fatty, add the vinegar. This recipe also works extremely well for chicken.

The following is an exquisite north African recipe, which provides an interesting comparison with the one above:

MODERN MOROCCAN RECIPE

Chicken with Prunes

Take a large chicken that has been thoroughly cleaned and washed and cut it into pieces. Brown it in a casserole with a little oil. Season with salt and crumbled hot red pepper and add a ladle of boiling water. Slice 2 large onions and add them to the chicken. Cook for 20 minutes over a low heat. Remove the pits from around $\frac{3}{4}$ lb. (400 g.) of prunes and add. Continue to cook for 40 minutes. Serve with couscous.

The hot red pepper (from America) in this recipe is the counterpart of the peppercorns in the ancient recipe.



DUCK WITH TURNIPS

(APICIUS 214)

Gruem vel anatem ex rapis: Lauas, ornas et in olla elixabis cum aqua, sale et ameto dimidia coctura. Rapas coque ut exbromari possint. Levabis de olla, et iterum lavabis et in caccabum mittis anatem cum oleo et liquamine et fasciculo porri et coriandri. Rapam lotam et minutatim concisam de super mittis, facies ut coquatur. Modica coctura mittis defritum ut coloreti. Ius tale parabis: piper, cuminum, coriandrum, laseris radicem, suffundis acetum et ius de suo sibi, reexanimas super anatem ut ferveat. Cum ferbuerit, annulo obligabis et super rapas adicies. Piper aspargis et adponis.

Crane or duck with turnips: Wash, truss, and boil in a pan with water, salt, and dill until half cooked. Remove the duck nips so that they lose their bitterness. Remove the duck from the pan, wash again, and place in a pot with oil and *garum* and a bouquet of leeks and coriander. Over this put a turnip that has been well washed and cut into very small pieces, and cook. When it has cooked somewhat, add *defritum* for color. Prepare this sauce: pepper, cumin, coriander, and silphium root, moistened with vinegar and cooking broth. Pour over the duck and boil. When it boils, thicken with starch and add over the [remaining] turnips. Sprinkle with pepper and serve.

Coriander, and silphium root, moistened with vinegar and cooking broth. Pour over the duck and boil. When it boils, thicken with starch and add over the [remaining] turnips. Sprinkle with pepper and serve.

Serves 4

1 large duck

1 Tbs. olive oil

1 tsp. *garum*

1 small tender leek

1 bunch fresh coriander (or lemon balm)

1½ lb. (700 g.) turnips

2 Tbs. *defritum*

For the sauce:

1 Tbs. total, cumin and coriander

1 garlic clove, pressed for its juice

1 Tbs. vinegar

pepper to taste

1 tsp. cornstarch (if necessary)

This recipe resembles the famous French *canard aux navets*, of which it is probably an ancient relative. However, here the turnips are boiled apart so that they do not give the duck too bitter a flavor.

As always, you can omit the initial boiling of the meat. Put the duck in a pot to brown with a little olive oil, *garum*, and a securely tied bouquet of the leek and coriander. Slice one turnip, add it, then mix in the *defritum*. Cook over a low heat. Boil the remaining turnips (make sure you have chosen only those that are very fresh and firm) separately so that they lose their bitterness. Prepare a sauce with the herbs, garlic juice, vinegar, and pepper, and pour it over the duck. Mix well, thickening if necessary with dissolved starch. Slice the boiled turnips, add them to the duck, and serve.

ROASTED PIGEONS

(APICIUS 221)

In palumbis, columbis. In assis: Piper, ligusticum, coriandrum, careum, cepam siccam, mentum, oui vitellum, cariotam, mel, acetum, liquamen, oleum et vinum.

For roasted pigeons and doves: Pepper, lovage, coriander, caraway, dried onion, mint, egg yolk, dates, honey, vinegar, *garum*, oil, and wine.

Serves 4
2–3 pigeons, depending upon their size
For the sauce:

- 2 Tbs. dried onion
pinch of pepper
2 Tbs. total, lovage, coriander, caraway, and mint
1 egg yolk
5–6 pitted dates
1 tsp. honey
1 tsp. vinegar
1 tsp. *garum*
2 Tbs. olive oil
1 cup white wine
- Procure pigeons that are already cleaned and trussed and roast them in the oven at 400°F. for around 30 minutes. Meanwhile, prepare the cold sauce with the remaining ingredients (the dates should first be chopped and ground in a mortar) and serve it together with the pigeons.

STUFFED THRUSHES OR PIGEONS

(APICIUS 231)

Altiter avem: In ventrem eius fractas olivas novas mittis et consutam sic elixabis. Deinde coctas olivas eximes.

Another recipe for birds: Stuff the stomach with crushed fresh olives, sew up, and boil thus. Then remove the cooked olives.

Serves 4
4 thrushes or small pigeons
4 Tbs. ground olives
4 Tbs. crumbled bread without the crust (optional)
milk (to soak the bread)

This recipe is for birds in general, thus you can use any fowl you desire—for example, quail, thrushes, doves, or pigeons. I have tried it with thrushes and pigeons and found it to be very good.

Soak the olives overnight so that they lose their bitterness, then grind them in a mortar or blender. (You can also use olive paste, or *epityrum*, as a stuffing; see the recipe on pp. 59–60.)

Stuff the birds with the olive pulp, sew them up securely, and cook. The recipe suggests that they be boiled, in which case cooking time should be

around 30 minutes. However, I think the result is far better if the birds are roasted instead. Should you decide to follow this latter method, put the stuffed birds in a pan and roast at 400°F. for 30 minutes, or broil for around 20 minutes.

If you want the stuffing to be a bit milder in flavor, you can mix the ground olives with an equal amount of bread that has been soaked in milk and then squeezed and drained. This stuffing can be left inside the birds; otherwise, you should remove and discard the olives before the birds are brought to table.

Thrushes were raised in captivity, as we know from Columella's manual. Their meat must have been considered quite a delicacy, since the Romans went to extraordinary lengths to feed these birds well. In fact, they were given a mixture of myrtle and other aromatic berries, fine flour, and dried figs that were softened by slaves who chewed them first. This fragrant sweet blend was so good that Columella (8, 10) added: "There is little convenience in adopting this system when a large quantity of thrushes is involved, because the slaves who are hired to chew the dried figs consume some of the feed for the thrushes." This situation would seem humorous were it not for the fact that it reveals the tragic condition of the *instrumentum vocale* (appliance that speaks), as a slave was legally defined in ancient Rome.

STUFFED HARE

(APICIUS 386)

Leporem farsum: Nucleos integros, amigdala, nuces sive glandes concisas, piperis grana solida, pulpam de ipso lepore; et ovis fractis obligatur; de omento porcino [involutum assatur] in furno. Sic iterum impensam facies: rutam, piper satis, cepsam, saturaeam, dactilos, liquamen, caroenum vel conditum. Diu combulliat donec spisset, et sic perfunditur. Sed lepus in piperato liquamine et lasere maneat.

Stuffed hare: Whole pine nuts, almonds, chopped walnuts or acorns, whole peppercorns, variety meats of the hare itself, and beaten eggs to thicken. [Wrap the hare] in pork omentum and [roast] in the oven. Separately, prepare this mixture: rue, sufficient pepper, onion, savory, dates, *garum*, and *caroenum* or *conditum*. Boil at length to thicken, and then pour it over [the hare]. But the hare must marinate in a pepper sauce with *garum* and silphium.

Serves 4

1 hare

For the marinade:

2 cups *garum*

10 peppercorns

2 garlic cloves

1 handful of fresh aromatic herbs as preferred

For the stuffing:

7 oz. (200 g.) total, pine nuts, almonds, and walnuts

1 tsp. peppercorns

1 liver from the hare

2–3 chicken livers (if necessary)

2 eggs, beaten

For the sauce:

1 cup strong red wine, *caroenum*, or *conditum*

1 tsp. *garum*

pinch of pepper

1 Tbs. total, rue and savory

5–6 pitted and minced dates

1 onion, minced

1 tsp. cornstarch (if necessary)

The last sentence of this recipe actually describes the first procedure: marinate the hare in *garum*, peppercorns, and sulphur (substitute the cloves of garlic and add some fresh aromatic herbs) for at least 24 hours, turning occasionally, then remove.

Prepare the stuffing by grinding together the nuts, peppercorns, hare liver, and eggs. If the animal is large you may need to add a few chicken livers to the mixture. Stuff the hare, sew it shut or close with skewers, place in a baking dish, and roast in the oven for 2 hours at 350°F.

Meanwhile, prepare the sauce. Mix the listed ingredients together and cook over a low heat to thicken. If you prefer a sweet-and-sour flavor, use *caroenum* instead of the red wine or *conditum*. Use dissolved starch to thicken the sauce if necessary. You can pour this sauce over the hare when it is done, or serve it on the side.

globurn ex ea. In caccabo coques liquamen, vinum, oleum,

acetum modice, cepullam concisam, postea globulum con-

dimentorum mities et agitabis origano vel satureia. Si opus

fuerit, amulas.

Clear sauce for roasted hare: Pepper, lovage, cumin, celery seeds, yolk of hard-boiled egg. Grind, gather up, and make a ball of this. In a pot cook *garum*, wine, oil, a bit of vinegar, chopped onion; then add the ball of condiments and stir with oregano or savory. If necessary, thicken with starch.

Serves 4

1 hare

For the sauce:

pepper to taste

1 tsp. each, lovage, cumin, and celery seeds

1 hard-boiled egg yolk

1 cup red wine

1 tsp. *garum*

1 tsp. vinegar

1 Tbs. olive oil

1 Tbs. minced onion

1 bunch fresh oregano or savory

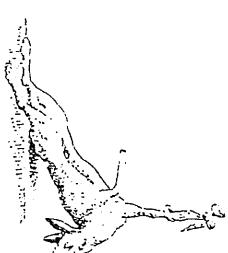
1 tsp. cornstarch (if necessary)

Procure a cleaned hare with the head and feet removed. Roast it in the oven for 90 minutes, or on a spit for 2 hours.

For the sauce, grind the pepper, herbs, and the hard-boiled egg yolk together, and press the mixture into a ball. Sauté the onion in the wine, *garum*, vinegar, and olive oil, then add the herb ball and blend thoroughly. Stirring with the bunch of oregano or savory that has been tied into a bouquet. If the resulting sauce is too thin, add a bit of starch (dissolve first in a bit of cooled sauce) before removing from the heat. Serve on the side.

ROASTED HARE WITH HERB SAUCE

(Apicius 387)



Ius album in assum leporem: Piper, ligusticum, cuminum, apii semen, ovi duri medium. Trituram colligis et facies

ROASTED LEG OF ROEBUCK WITH HERB SAUCE

(Apicius 348)

Ius in caprea assa: Piper, condimentum, rutam, cepam, mel, liquamen, passum, oleum modice, amulum [cum] iam bullet.

Sauce for roasted roebuck: Pepper, aromatic herbs, rue, onion, honey, *garum*, *passum*, and a bit of oil; starch, when it boils.

Series 4

2 lb. (1 kg.) leg of roebuck

For the sauce:

pepper to taste

1 tsp. rue

1 Tbs. minced fresh aromatic herbs as preferred

1 onion, minced

1 tsp. *garum*

1 tsp. honey

1 cup *passum*

1 Tbs. olive oil

1 tsp. cornstarch

The recipe indicates only that the meat should be roasted. As it cooks, grind together the pepper, rue, herbs (for example, mint, oregano, and lovage), minced onion, *garum*, and honey; then add the *passum* and olive oil, and heat it in a small pan. When it is cooked, thicken with dissolved cornstarch. Serve on the side.

ROASTED BOAR WITH COOKED SAUCE

(Apicius 333)

In aprum assum iura ferventia facies sic: Piper, cuminum frictum, apii semen, mentam, timum, satureiam, cneci flos, nucleos tostos vel amigdala tosta, mel, vinum, liquamen acetabulum, oleum modice.

Prepare a heated sauce for roasted boar thus: Pepper, fried cumin, celery seed, mint, thyme, savory, safflower, roasted pine nuts or roasted almonds, honey, wine, an *acetabulum* of *garum*, and a bit of oil.

Serves 4

2 lb. (800 g.–1 kg.) boar tenderloin or shoulder butt, cut into large cubes

For the marinade:

2 cups strong red wine

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup vinegar

1 Tbs. *garum*

1 Tbs. total, celery seeds, mint, thyme, and savory

For the sauce:

1 tsp. cumin

$\frac{1}{2}$ oz. (35–40 g.) pine nuts

2 oz. (50 g.) almonds

1 Tbs. total, celery seeds, mint, thyme, and savory

pinch of pepper

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup red wine

1 tsp. *garum*

1 tsp. honey

1 tsp. olive oil

1 Italian packet (.12 g.) or $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. ground saffron

This is another recipe that lacks directions for cooking the meat, beyond stating that it should be roasted. One good method would be to marinate the pieces of boar for 24 hours in the same herbs you use for the sauce, mixed with red wine, vinegar, and *garum*. Then drain the meat and roast it in a moderately hot oven (350°F.) for around 2 hours.

For the sauce: Roast the cumin in a pan for a few minutes, and do the same for the pine nuts and almonds. Chop together the herbs, pine nuts, and almonds; add the pepper, wine, *garum*, honey, and olive oil, then finally the saffron. Heat. Serve on the side.

STUFFED LEG OF BOAR À LA TERENTIUS

(Apicius 339)

Perna apruna ita impletur Terentina: Per articulum pernae palmum mittes ita ut cutem a carne separe, ut possit condimentum accipere per cornulum ut universa impleatur. Teres pipes, bacam lauri, rutam, si volueris, laser adicies, liquamen optimum, carenum et olei viridis guttas. Cum impletta fuerit, constringitur illa pars qua impleta est ex lino et nititur in zemam. Elixatur in aquam marinam cum lauri turionibus et aneto.

A leg of a boar is filled thus in the manner of Terentius: Pass a pointed stick along the joint of the leg to separate the skin from the meat, so that the seasoning can be poured through a small funnel and [the space between] can be completely filled. Grind pepper, bay berries, rue; if you wish, add silphium, fine *garum*, *caroenum*, and drops of green oil. When it is stuffed, the filled part is fastened with flax string and it is placed in a cauldron. It is boiled in sea water with bay twigs and dill.

Serves 6–8

4½ lb. (2 kg.) leg of boar (with the skin)
2–3 bay twigs
1 bunch fresh dill

For the stuffing:
2 Tbs. *garum*

½ cup *caroenum*
½ cup olive oil
7–8 garlic cloves
4–5 bay berries
pepper to taste
2 handfuls of fresh rue

The initial preparation of the leg is rather difficult; if you can, have your butcher separate the entire skin in one piece like a pocket from the meat. Grind and mix the ingredients listed for the stuffing, and place this mixture between the skin and the meat; then close the opening securely with string so that the stuffing does not come out. Boil for 3 hours in heavily salted water (the Romans kept sea water in barrels and used it in the preparation of many dishes), to which you have added a few twigs of bay and some dill.

Terentius was a famous cook and gourmet, after whom a very popular dessert called *terentinon* was named. He is also mentioned in Apicius 166, on page 135.

MARINATED VENISON SADDLE WITH PRUNE SAUCE

(Apicius 346)

In cernum assum iura fermentia: Piper, ligusticum, petroselinum, damascena macerata, vinum, mel, acetum, liquamen, oleum modice. Agitabis porro et satureia.

A heated sauce for roasted deer: Pepper, lovage, parsley, soaked damsons, wine, honey, vinegar, *garum*, and a bit of oil. Stir with leek and savory.

Serves 8–10

4½ lb. (2 kg.) venison saddle
For the marinade:
2 cups red wine
1 Tbs. *garum*
10 peppercorns
5–6 bay berries
1 Tbs. total, savory and lovage

For the sauce:
10 oz. (300 g.) pitted prunes, plumped in wine

pinch of pepper
1 Tbs. total, parsley and lovage
1 cup red wine
1 Tbs. honey
1 Tbs. *garum*
1 Tbs. olive oil
1 Tbs. vinegar
1 small tender leek
1 bunch fresh savory

The sauce is an excellent accompaniment for either roasted saddle or leg of venison. I have chosen the version using the saddle, which you can prepare thus:

Make a marinade of the ingredients listed above and heat for around 10 minutes. Put the saddle in a casserole and pour the marinade over it. Cover securely and refrigerate for 2 days, turning the meat regularly so that it marinates uniformly. Remove the meat, put it in a clean casserole and roast in a moderately hot oven (350°F.) for 90 minutes, moistening occasionally with the marinade.

Prepare the sauce by mixing and heating the ingredients listed. Regarding the suggestion to stir the sauce with leek and savory, you can simply tie them into a bouquet, add it to the sauce as it cooks, and remove before serving.

This recipe is also good as a stew. For 4 servings, you can marinate 1¾ pounds (800 grams) of boned venison for 12 hours, then cook it in the sauce. Add the prunes only when the meat is half done. Total cooking time depends upon the cut of meat; ask your butcher for advice.

ROASTED FLAMINGO OR PARROT

(APICIUS 232)

Fenicopterum eliberas, lavas, ornas, includis in caccabum, adicies aquam, salem, anetum et aceti modicum. Dimitia cottura aligas fasciculum porri et coriandri ut coquatur. Prope cocturam defritum mittis, coloras. Adicies in mortarium piper, cuminum, coriandrum, laseris radicem, mentam, rutam, fricabis, suffundis acetum, adicies careiam, ius de suo sibi perfundis. Reeximanes in eundem caccabum, amulo obligas. Ius perfundis et inferes. Idem facies et in psittaco.

Pluck the flamingo, wash it, truss it, put it in a pot; add water, salt, dill, and a bit of vinegar. When it is half cooked, tie together a bouquet of leeks and coriander and cook [together with the flamingo]. When it is almost cooked, add *defritum* for color. In a mortar put pepper, cumin, coriander, siphium root, mint, and rue; grind, moisten with vinegar, add dates, and pour on cooking broth. Empty into the same pot and thicken with starch. Pour the sauce over [the flamingo] and serve. Do the same for parrot.

Obviously this is a recipe for us to read but not to realize. I include it here as an example of the extreme self-indulgence that occurred among the ruling classes during the decadent years of the Roman Empire. Even worse, flamingos were said to have been slaughtered for their tongues or brains alone (*Historia Augusta*, *Heliogabalus* 20, 6; Pliny, *Naturalis historia* 10, 133; and Martial 13, 71).



VIII

FISH AND SHELLFISH

MENSA PRIMA

Gudgeon
Even in lavish banquets of Venetian lands,
the gudgeon usually opens the meal.

(Martial 13, 88)

Gilthead
Not every gilthead is worthy of its praise and price,
but only that which feeds on the mollusks of the Lucrine
Lake.

(Martial 13, 90)

“Culinary delicacies were held in high regard . . . and just as previously Numantius [Scipio Aemilianus Africanus] and Isauricus [Servilius Vatia] adopted the names of the peoples they had conquered, so Sergius Orata [Gilthead] and Licinius Murena [Eel] proudly adopted the names of the fish they raised in captivity.” This brief extract from Columella (8, 16, 5) gives us a striking sense of the passion that the Romans always had for fish, especially seafood. Because the daily deliveries from the *Forum piscarium*, or Fish Market, were not enough to meet the demand, the Romans built enormous ponds in order to keep all types of fresh fish available. Small lakes were used for industrial-scale breeding; Pliny wrote that a breeder named Gaius Hirrius was able to furnish Julius Caesar with six thousand moray eels for a victory banquet (*Naturalis historia* 9, 171). When a particular species of fish became scarce in the local seas, the Romans immediately went elsewhere to replenish the supply. During the epoch of the emperor Claudius, the prefect of the navy was commanded to bring *scari*, an extremely popular fish, from the eastern Mediterranean to repopulate the western Mediterranean. The species was protected from fishing for five years, after which period it again filled the fish markets.