

CHAPTER XIII: DE ARTE COQVINARIA

DATE	AD 26
TOP STORY	Emperor Tiberius has left Rome for the island of Capri
FEATURE	Apicius gives a lesson in Roman cooking

PROLOGVS

In this episode, Tiberius (emperor AD 14–37) has just left Rome for the imperial estate on the island of Capreae (Capri), where he is said to have indulged shamelessly in various pleasures—including gastronomic ones. *Forum Romanum* takes this opportunity to look at the gourmet food scene in Rome. Celebrity chef Marcus Apicius is on hand to discuss the health benefits of various foods and the condiments that can be used to spice them up. He also shares recipes and demonstrates cooking techniques.

Marcus Apicius was a real person who lived in the time of Tiberius and was well known in the world of haute cuisine, but the book that is often attributed to him (*De arte coquinaria*), from which this episode takes its name, was actually written in the fourth century.

This episode features the premiere of a new segment (*De Ludis*), which will cover recent happenings in the world of Roman sports. Sportscaster Scirtus Agitator, formerly a driver on the chariot-racing circuit, reports on his favorite sport with particular gusto.

Here are some questions to help you know what to look for:

1. How does the *dictum hodiernum* for this episode relate to the theme of this show?
2. What are some of the specific kinds of food and drink mentioned by Apicius, the guest of honor in this episode?
3. What two dishes does Serenus mention as personal favorites just before he gives the day's weather?
4. What are the names of some of the horses mentioned by Scirtus in the sports segment when he relates the results of the chariot races?



A SCENE FROM DE ARTE COQUINARIA

VERSUS

Nota bene: People, places, and things explained in the *Commentarium* section below are in boldface. Terms and difficult vocabulary defined in the *Glossarium* section below are underlined.

SALUTATIO

FAVONIUS

Salvete, omnes! Mihi nomen est Marcus Favonius et hoc est *Forum Romanum*!
Quid novi est hodie? Brevi tempore videbimus. At prius, ecce dictum hodiernum!

DICTIONUM HODIERNUM

LECTOR

Hoc est dictum hodiernum: **De gustibus non est disputandum.**

QUID NOVI?

FAVONIUS

Verba notanda. Et nunc videamus quid novi sit. Imperator Tiberius Iulius Caesar Augustus Roma **Capreas** profectus est! In animo habet Tiberius vivere ac valere in hac insula parva, procul a curis Urbis. Quia loquimur de illa vita bona qua Tiberius Capreis mox fruetur, opportunitum est introducere hominem insignem hodiernum qui est cum Iulia Pauli.

PERSONA NOTANDA (COOKING DEMONSTRATION BY APICIUS)

IULIA

Gratias, Favoni. Mecum est Marcus Apicius, coquus clarissimus. Multum salve, Apici!

APICIUS

Et tu, Iulia. Pergratum est mihi tecum loqui de arte coquinaria.

IULIA

Ergo narra tu nobis quidnam cibi paraveris hodie.

APICIUS

Libenter. Ecce omnia quae velis—**ab ovo usque ad mala.**

IULIA

Facete dictum.

APICIUS

Ecce, panis, caseus, oleum, et mel; pisces fricti atque carnes assatae; patinae pomorum et holerum—praesertim brassica et asparagus, ambo **optimi non solum ad gulam sed etiam ad ventrem!**

IULIA

Mea mater idem dicebat.

APICIUS

Recte ea dixit. Scisne autem iecur piscis optimum esse sanguini valido corporique robustiori?

IULIA

Numquam antea haec audivi. Verone?

APICIUS

Verumst. Ecce me!

COQUA

Quid sit robustius?

IULIA

Certissime.

APICIUS

Deridesne me? Vapula!

IULIA

Nolo. Ignosce mihi, Apici. Perge, amabo te.

APICIUS

Ita faciam. Hic sunt ea quae maxime ad artem coquinariam pertinent: condimenta—id est, garum et liquamina varia, atque sal et piper, sine quo non decet ullam patinam condi. Sit amor condimentum vitae, tamen, si me consultas, piper est condimentum cibi!

IULIA

Fortasse, sed **piper et garum** maximi pretii sunt, nonne?

APICIUS

Fateor, sed vivere est valere et, ut mihi videtur, valere est bene cenare. Atque sine dubio bene cenare operae pretium est!

IULIA

Verum perdifficil' est omnia haec spectare cum moriar fame extrema. Da mi gustum, quaeso!

APICIUS

At vero ut aiunt, fames est cibi condimentum optimum. Ergo, em tibi. Ecquid libet?

IULIA

Haud libet. Quidnam id est?

APICIUS

Isicia de cerebellis.

IULIA

Sapit quasi gallinacea. Non mihi placet.

APICIUS

At tamen ut plerumque dictum est, de gustibus non est disputandum!

IULIA

Constat. Sed quid aliud?

APICIUS

Patina ex piscibus mullis. Est mullus salsus.

IULIA

Plurimum salsus! Da mi quod bibam, si vis.

COQUA

Em tibi.

APICIUS

Em tibi.

IULIA

Mmm, suave. Quid est?

APICIUS

Conditum paradoxum—vinum caldum cum melle et pipere.

IULIA

Valde placet. Sed quomodo fit haec patina de piscibus?

APICIUS

Patina sic fit. Ecce caepae. Oportet coquere pisces cum paululum olei super caepis. Cum bene cocti sunt pisces, paululum vini melliti addas et sparge cum pipere aut quovis condimento. Lepidum!

IULIA

Optime, bone vir. Utinam plus temporis esset nobis sed, ut semper, tempus fugit. Ecquid aliud vis tu nostris spectatoribus dicere?

APICIUS

Hoc tantum: vivamus dum licet esse bene...tanto magis dum licet esse bene!

IULIA

Facete dictum! Summas gratias, Apici, et bene vale. Totum est, Favoni. Rursus ad te!

TEMPESTAS HODIERNA

FAVONIUS

Tempus est audire de tempestate hodierna. Itaque, ecce Aulus Serenus!

SERENUS

Gratias tibi ago, Favoni. Valde esurio omnia haec obsonia spectando. Porcellus assatus mihi maxime placet. Et **glires** pipere sparsi! Quid sit melius! Sed tamen, videamus quaenam sit tempestas hodie. Quam bellus est dies Romae hodie. Magis idoneus cenae sumptuosae! Usque serenum est. Vix unus nimbus in caelo. Etiam sunt auspicia bona ad tempestatem crastinam. Atque paene totam per Italiam sol splendide lucet. Gratias Apollini! Sunt nonnulli nimbi, tamen, apud **Neapolim**, non tam procul ab insula Capreis, domu novissima Imperatoris Tiberi ipsius. Et nunc, videamus quaenam sit tempestas alibi circum Mare Nostrum. In Britannia, pluit ut semper. Tempestas in Gallia et Germania frigida est. Nec mirum. In Graecia et Asia pluit paullulum. In Africa et Aegypto aestuosum est. Sic calet tamquam furnus. Tandem in Hispania sol plerumque lucet. Iam satis est. Tempus cenare adest. Ergo eundumst mihi. Aulus Serenus sum atque spero caela sint vobis valde serena!

DE LUDIS

FAVONIUS

Multas gratias, Serene. Et nunc, ut de ludis audiamus, praesto est Scirtus Agitator!

SCIRTUS

Avete omnes! Scirtus Agitator nominor itaque eamus ad ludos! Sed primum, hoc cupio scire: quid significat “ad gustum?” Cum libros de re coquinaria legam, saepissime sunt scripta praecepta sicut “adde salem et piper ad gustum.” Abs te quaero, quantum est “ad gustum?” Peream si sciam. Et isti callidi coqui his diebus omnes volunt **cibum dissimulare**—carnes facti piscibus aut poma crustulis facta. Quid negoti est? Vah, nil refert! Sed tamen...Ludi circenses editi sunt hodie ab Imperatore Tiberio Iulio Caesare Augusto **in memoriam divi Augusti** et pro salute Populo Romano. Consensu omnium optimi erant. **Factio Albata**—olim factio in qua ego ipse multas victorias vici—quinque cursus vicit. **Factio Prasina** septem cursus vicit, **Russata** quattuor et **Veneta** octo. Fortunatus, agitator factionis prasinae, **eripuit et palmam vicit** equis his: Victore, Dario, Scintilla, et Pegaso. Bene memini cum adhuc essem auriga in Circo. Olim aurigae audacissimi erant, non sic ut isti barbatuli iuvenes qui sunt aurigae his diebus. At tamen, ne longum faciam...Haec est fabula, spectator bone, vive valeque et otiosus esto!

VALEDICTIO

FAVONIUS

Gratias, Scirte. Et nunc, **ludis amotis seria quaeramus**. Ut repetamus nuntios principales: Imperator Tiberius Iulius Caesar Augustus Roma Capreas profectus est! Sic factumst hodie. Gratias plurimas Apicio coquo agere volumus. Totum est ad hanc editionem *Fori Romani*. Gratias summas agimus et di vobis faveant. Valete omnes!

COMMENTARIUM

ab ovo usque ad mala. Literally, “from egg to apples.” This expression is the Latin equivalent to our English expression “from soup to nuts” and means “from start to finish.” Romans often had eggs as an appetizer and apples for desert.

Capreas. Capri (Capreae) is an island in the Bay of Naples, off the west coast of Italy. Tiberius grew tired of the hustle and bustle and the political shenanigans of Rome and spent the last ten years of his reign on Capri.

cibum dissimulare. Scirtus is commenting on clever cooks of the Empire who attempt to show their skill by creating false foods—food that looks like one thing but is made of something else.

De gustibus non est disputandum. Literally, “One must not argue about tastes.” This *dictum* makes the point that when it comes to personal taste—be it food or otherwise—it is useless to argue about what’s good or bad, right or wrong.

eripuit et palmam vicit. This phrase is chariot-racing talk for “he broke away from the pack and won the race.”

Factio Albata, Prasina, Russata, Veneta. These were the four common chariot-racing “companies,” designated by the colors they wore: white, green, red, and blue.

glires. *Glires* were dormice, a delicacy for the ancient Romans.

in memoriam divi Augusti. Games were often given by someone (here, the emperor Tiberius) in honor of a deceased person (in this case, his stepfather, the emperor Augustus). Augustus is called *divus* because after his death the Roman senate declared him a god.

ludis amotis seria quaeramus. “Games aside, let’s turn to serious matters.” Favonius is loosely quoting a line from Horace’s first *Satire*: *sed tamen amoto quaeramus seria ludo*.

Neapolim. Neapolis (Naples) was—and is—an important city in Campania, the area of Italy along the west coast and south of Rome.

optimi non solum ad gulam sed etiam ad ventrem. “Good not only for the taste buds but for the stomach too.” The Romans held that cabbage and asparagus were good for the digestion.

piper et garum. For the Romans, pepper was expensive and highly sought after. Garum was a type of fish sauce that Romans used on all sorts of food.

GLOSSARIUM

ad gustum – according to taste

barbatuli iuvenes – young men with their silly little beards (goatees)

brassica – cabbage

caepae – onions

carnes assatae – roasted meat

caseus – cheese

Conditum paradoxum – a type of hot drink

coquus – cook

esse – Apicius makes a wordplay by combining esse (to be) in the first instance and esse (to eat) in the second.

Facete – cleverly, neatly

garum et liquamina varia – fish sauce and other types of sauces

holerum – of vegetables

iecur – liver

isicia de cerebellis – brain sausage

maximi pretii sunt – are very expensive

mullis – mullet (a type of fish)

obsonia – food

operae pretium est – is well worth the price

opportunum est – this is a good time to...

patinae – dishes, plates

poma crustulis facta – fruit made from cakes

Porcellus assatus – roast suckling pig

quidnam cibi – what food

Sic calet tamquam furnus – It's as hot as an oven

Urbis – of Rome ("the City")

Vapula! – You good-for-nothing! (or "I ought to give you a whack!")

vini melliti – of honeyed wine

LATINE LOQUAMVR

Useful expressions

Here are some examples of conversational Latin used in this show. Try out some or all of these useful expressions in your own Latin conversations.

bene vale – bye	Nec mirum – And no wonder
bone vir – my good man	Nil refert! – It doesn't matter!
Certissime – No doubt	nonne? – right?
Constat. – Agreed.	Otiosus esto! – Take it easy!
Da mi gustum, quaeso! – Give me a taste, please!	Peream si sciam – Darned if I know
Da mi quod bibam. – Give me something to drink.	Perge, amabo te – Continue, please
Deridesne me? – Are you making fun of me?	Pergratum est mihi – I'm real happy to...
Ecquid libet? – So, do you like it?	Quid negoti est? – What's the deal?
em tibi – here you go	Quid sit melius! – What could be better?
eundumst mihi – I gotta go	Quidnam id est? – What the heck is it?
Facete dictum – Well said (Clever!)	Sed tamen – But anyhow...
Fateor – I admit it	Si me consultas – If you ask me
Hoc tantum – only this	si vis – if you please
Ignosce mihi – Pardon me	Summas gratias – Thanks so much
In animo habet – he has in mind (he intends)	ut aiunt – as they say
Lepidum! – How nice!	ut mihi videtur – as it seems to me
Libenter – Gladly	Verone? – Really?
Multum salve! – A hearty hello!	Verumst – It's true (Yep)
ne longum faciam – to make a long story short	

Talking the talk

Below is a short conversation that uses some of these useful expressions. Do your best to translate the conversation, then practice the dialogue in Latin with a partner.

Marcus: Salve, bone vir! Quid agis?

Aulus: Multum salve! Optime agitur.

Marcus: Verone? Quid negoti est?

Aulus: In animo habeo Capreas iter facere!

Marcus: Capreasne? Verone?

Aulus: Verumst. Quid sit melius!

Marcus: Sed tamen, eundumst mihi! Vale, ergo.

Aulus: Bene vale! Otiosus esto!

GRAMMATICA

As a grammarian, you should know a grammatical form when you see it. But as a translator, use context as your guide and remember that a good translation must sound good in English.

1. Verb forms: Present and past tense

The present tense in Latin covers several aspects of present tense in English: “I walk,” “I am walking,” or “I do walk.” There are several aspects of past tense in Latin: the imperfect, the perfect (used for both simple past and present perfect tenses), the pluperfect, and the future perfect. Consider the following examples from the script and how they are best translated.

Example in context

1. Mater idem dicebat.
2. Recte dixit.
3. Numquam antea haec audivi.
4. Factio Albata quinque cursus vicit.

Translation

1. My mother used to say the same thing.
2. She spoke correctly (Right she was!)
3. I've never heard that before.
4. The White Company won five races.

2. Commands: Imperative verb forms

The imperative mood is the verb form to use when you are speaking directly to someone and you command, tell, or ask them to do something. (“Imperative” comes from *imperare*, “to command.”) Plural commands (to more than one person) usually add *-te*.

Example in context

1. Narra tu nobis
2. Salve!
3. Perge, amabo te.
4. Avete, omnes!
5. Vive valeque!
6. Valete omnes!

Explanation

1. Tell us
2. Hello!
3. Go on, please.
4. Greetings, everyone!
5. Live and be well!
6. Farewell, everyone!

3. Question words (Interrogatives)

One way simple questions are formed in Latin is by adding the suffix *-ne* to the verb form. Another way, of course, is to start the question with an interrogative pronoun, adjective, or adverb—who, which, what, where, when, why, how?

Example in context

1. Quid novi est hodie?
2. Scisne?
3. Deridesne me?
4. Quid est?
5. Quidnam id est?
6. Sed quomodo fit haec patina?

Translation

1. What's new today?
2. Do you know?
3. Are you making fun of me?
4. What is it?
5. What the heck is it?
6. But how is this dish made?

RĒCITATIO

Practice reading aloud—with your teacher or in pairs—these excerpts from the show. After you practice reading aloud, sum up in a few words what the excerpt is about. At this point, don't translate, just give the gist—that is, an in-a-nutshell summary or paraphrase.

Iulia: Verum perdifficil' est omnia haec spectare cum moriar fame extrema. Da mi gustum, quaeso!

Apicius: At vero ut aiunt, fames est cibi condimentum optimum. Ergo, em tibi. Ecquid libet?

Iulia: Haud libet. Quidnam id est?

Apicius: Isicia de cerebellis.

Iulia: Sapit quasi gallinacea. Non mihi placet.

Apicius: At tamen ut plerumque dictum est, de gustibus non est disputandum!

Iulia: Constat. Sed quid aliud?

Apicius: Patina ex piscibus mullis. Est mullus salsus.

Iulia: Plurimum salsus! Da mi quod bibam, si vis.

DELIBERANDA

1. This episode was staged as a cooking show. Why do you think cooking shows have been and continue to be so popular?
2. What does the food a culture eats say about that culture? For example, what are the most common types of food eaten in our culture and what does it say about us?

EXERCITATIO

I. PARI RESPONDERE (MATCHING)

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| _____ 1. panis | A. cabbage |
| _____ 2. caseus | B. pepper |
| _____ 3. oleum | C. fish |
| _____ 4. mel | D. onions |
| _____ 5. pisces | E. salt |
| _____ 6. brassica | F. roast suckling pig |
| _____ 7. glires | G. bread |
| _____ 8. piper | H. dormice |
| _____ 9. carnes | I. vegetables |
| _____ 10. sal | J. fish sauce |
| _____ 11. vinum | K. honey |
| _____ 12. caepae | L. cheese |
| _____ 13. holera | M. wine |
| _____ 14. garum | N. meats |
| _____ 15. porcellus assatus | O. oil |

II. TRANSFER ANGLICE (TRANSLATE INTO ENGLISH)

1. Et nunc videamus quid novi sit.
2. Numquam antea haec audivi.
3. Deridesne me?
4. Da mihi gustum, quaeso!
5. Non mihi placet.
6. Ut semper, tempus fugit.
7. Valde esurio.
8. Paene totam per Italiam sol splendide lucet.
9. In Africa et Aegypto aestuosum est.
10. Tempus cenare adest, ero eundem est mihi.
11. Quid negoti est?
12. Ludi circenses editi sunt ab Imperatore Tiberio.
13. Imperator Tiberius Capreas profectus est.

III. QUOMODO DICITUR LATINE? (HOW DO YOU SAY IT IN LATIN?)

1. Hello, everyone!
2. Thank you.
3. words to remember
4. Excuse me.
5. And now...
6. In Britain it's raining, as always.
7. Let's go to the games!
8. Farewell, everyone!

STVDIA AMPLIVS: De gustibus non est disputandum

Have students work in small groups to complete the following chart, which lists food items described in the ancient cookbook of Apicius.

To do so, they must determine the English for the food and drink items listed in Latin. Then they need to record in their group each person's degree of like or dislike of that food by putting tally marks in the appropriate column for each group member's taste preference.

Latin	English	Haud mihi placet!	Non mihi placet	Mihi placet	Maxime mihi placet!	Nescio (Numquam edi!)
ACETUM						
AGNUS (AGNINA)						
AMYGDALA						
ANAS						
ANQUILLA						
APER						
ASPARAGUS						
BETAE						
BRASSICA						
BUBULA						
CAEPAE						
CANCER						
CAROTAE						
CASEUS						
CERASIA						
CERVUS						
COCHLEAE						
CUCUMERES						
FICUS						
FUNGI						
GARUM						
GLIRES						
IECUR						

LACTUCA						
LEPUS						
LOCUSTA						
MALUM						
MALUM GRANATUM						
MEL						
NUCES						
OLIVÆ						
OSTREA						
OSTREÆ						
OVA						
PANIS						
PERNA						
PERSICA						
PHASEOLI VIRIDES						
PISÆ						
PISCES FRICTI						
PORCINA						
PRUNA						
PULLUS						
UVÆ						
VITELLUS (VITELLINA)						