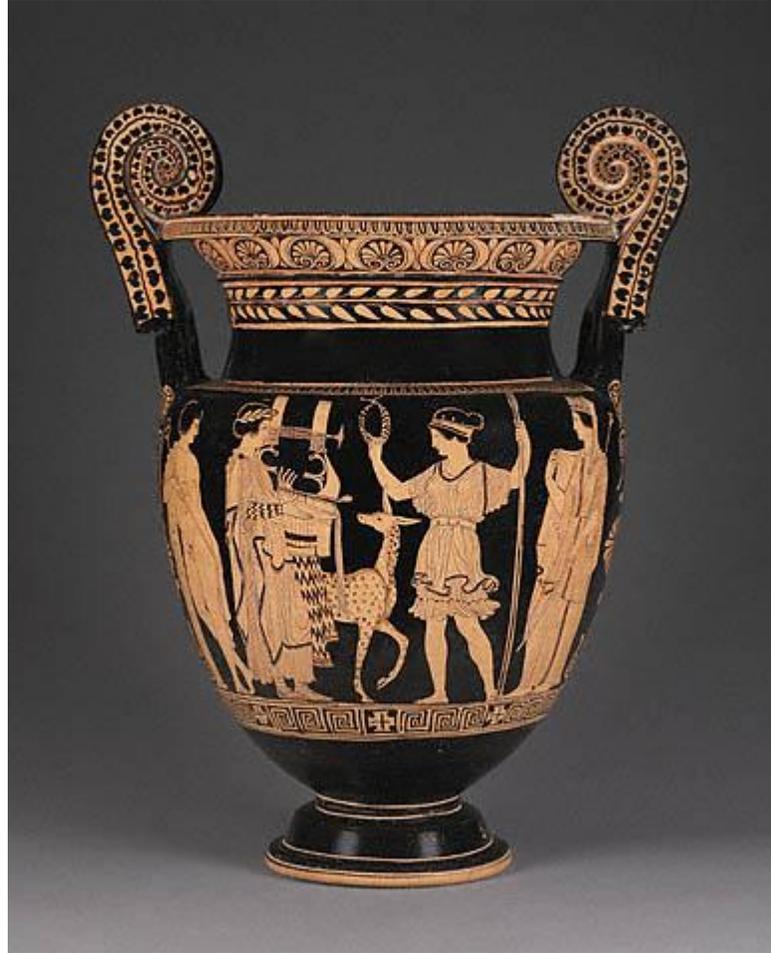


## Ancient Greek Symposia

A **symposium** was a social gathering in ancient Greece. At symposia, male citizens would gather for dinner, drinking, conversation, music, and entertainment. They would engage in jokes and games, recite poetry, and watch professional musicians and dancers.

The master of ceremonies for the evening, called the symposiarch, would decide how much wine would be drunk. Ancient Greeks diluted their wine with water, a practice that they believed set them apart from “barbarians,” which was a term they used to refer to all non-Greeks. The symposiarch would determine the proportion of water to wine, and servants would mix the liquids in a vessel called a krater (see example shown here).

Servants filled pitchers from the **krater** and poured the drink into wine cups. Douris and Python’s *Wine Cup with a Boy Holding a Lyre*\* is a fine example that would have been owned by a wealthy person and may have only been used for special occasions.



**Mixing Vessel with Apollo and Artemis**  
Attributed to the Palermo Painter  
Greek, Lucania, South Italy, about 415–400 B.C.  
Terracotta  
22 1/16 x 13 3/8 in.  
85.AE.101

\*See [http://getty.edu/education/teachers/classroom\\_resources/curricula/performing\\_arts/downloads/wine\\_cup.pdf](http://getty.edu/education/teachers/classroom_resources/curricula/performing_arts/downloads/wine_cup.pdf)

### Reference

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