

Pullum Particum (Parthian Chicken) is so far my favourite Apician recipe. I have cooked and tasted it twice and it is an absolute delight! This is one of the best chicken dishes I have ever had.

But what is *Pullum Particum*? Sally Grainger, the highly knowledgeable food historian, suggests that the name originated with the use of [asafetida](#) in the dish. Asafoetida is native to the mountains of Afghanistan and would have come to the Romans via trade with their Parthian neighbours. Or perhaps, the dish was Parthian in origin but adapted by the Romans to their taste (by adding caraway).

The following recipe was adapted from Apicius by Andrew Dalby and Sally Grainger. It can be found in their book, [The Classical Cookbook](#). I chose to serve this dish with Parthian chickpeas and a spoonful of some home-made date paste (as suggested by the excellent [Pass the Garum](#)). They make the ideal accompaniment to the chicken.

Pullum Particum recipe in Latin:

Apicius 6.9.2: *Pullum Parthicum: pullum aperies a nauis et in quadrato ornas. teres piper, ligusticum, carei modicum. suffunde liquamen. uino temperas. componis in Cumana pullum et condituram super pullum facies. laser et uinum interdus. dissolues et in pullum mittis simul et coques. piper aspersum inferes.*



Parthian Chicken & Chickpeas - Ingredients © Carole Raddato

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 4 pieces chicken (breast or leg)
- ground black pepper
- 1 Leek
- 6 fl oz (3/4 Cup/170 ml) red wine
- A hand full of dried dates cut into pieces
- 2 tablespoons (30 ml) garum (liquamen; substitute Vietnamese nuoc mam)
- 1/2 teaspoon laser (substitute asafetida powder or 5 drops asafetida tincture)
- 2 teaspoons chopped fresh lovage or celery leaf
- 2 teaspoons caraway seeds or cumin seeds

Method:

Place the chicken in a casserole dish and sprinkle it liberally with pepper.

Wash the leek and slice it into pieces. Add these to the dish with the chicken.

Combine the wine, fish sauce and asafoetida, add the lovage and caraway/cumin seeds and the pieces of dried dates and pour over the chicken.

Cover and bake in a pre-heated oven at 375° F (190° C/gas mark 5) for 1 hour. Half-way through the cooking time remove the lid to brown the chicken. Add a little more sauce if needed.

Serve with a little of the sauce poured over the meat.



Parthian Chicken & Chickpeas accompanied with Date Paste © Carole Raddato

For the Parthian chickpeas, I pretty much followed the recipe posted by [Pass the Garum](#), adding some white wine.

Recipe in Latin:

Apicius 5.3.7: *Aliter pisam sive fabam: despumatam subtrito lasare Parthico, liquamen et caroeno condies. Oleum modice superfundis et inferes.*

Ingredients (serves 2)

- 400g chickpeas
- 1/2 tsp Asafoetida
- 2 tbsp Fish Sauce ([buy Liquamen](#))
- 50 ml Grape Syrup or boiled white grape juice ([buy Caroenum](#))
- 2 tbsp Olive Oil
- White wine (boiled to remove the alcohol)

Method:

Boil the chickpeas for around 10 minutes and skim off.

Drain and add the asafoetida, fish sauce, white wine and grape syrup. For the boiled white grape juice, take a desired amount of white grape juice and boil it until until it thickens. Pour over the olive oil and give everything a mix.



Parthian Chicken & Chickpeas accompanied with Date Paste and Roman red wine © Carole Raddato

Making the date paste is easy. Take a handful of dates and plunge them in boiling water for 15 minutes. Then blend using a blender with a little water (2 or 3 tbsps).

This savoury and sweet dish should be served with some Roman red wine. I highly recommend this extraordinary spiced wine (*conditum paradoxum*) that you can buy online via the Der-Roemer shop [here](#).

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