

A Classic Court

Greek, The Creusa Painter, *Volute Krater (Mixing Vessel)*, about 400–380 BCE

The Greek god Dionysos, shown here with his wife Ariadne and his devoted entourage of worshipers, gave the gift of the grape vine and its cultivation to the ancient Greeks, making him the god of wine (among other things). This ceramic *krater* was used to mix strong wine with water, an appropriate vessel for depicting the god.

B Classic Court

Seleucid Empire, *Rhyton (Drinking Vessel) with the Forepart of a Zebu*, about 200–100 BCE

This luxurious silver drinking horn (called a *rhyton*) was based on vessels made from actual animal horns. It was meant for pouring wine (and aerating it) through the spout on the bull's chest or for communal drinking—it would be passed around until the wine was gone, so it could be set down without risk of spilling.

C Gallery 10

Japanese, *Netsuke: Shōjō Beside an Empty Wine Jar*, early 19th century

In Japanese mythology, a *shōjō* is a merry sea spirit with a particular love of alcohol. In this humorous miniature sculpture called a *netsuke*, a *shōjō* slumps against an empty wine jar, suffering from overindulgence.

D Gallery 16

Flemish (Tournai), Pair of Tapestries: *Winemaking*, about 1480

This pair of tapestries illustrates various activities related to winemaking, including transporting grapes (via donkey), filling the barrels, tapping wine caskets, and pouring the new vintage into a bowl. Look for the merchant counting out coins to purchase the wine. The man accepting the money was repaired at some point in the past using part of a figure from another tapestry, so he now appears to have four hands!



“In wine there is wisdom,
in beer there is Freedom,
and in water there is
bacteria.”

—Benjamin Franklin

Raise a Glass!

Alcoholic beverages have been part of the human diet since prehistoric times. It is unsurprising, then, that so much art has been created that depicts or even aids in the drinking of beer, wine, and liquor.

*Disclaimer: This tour is meant as a glimpse into the social history and artistic impact of drinking and is not intended to promote potent potables.

