



WESTON
MUSEUM

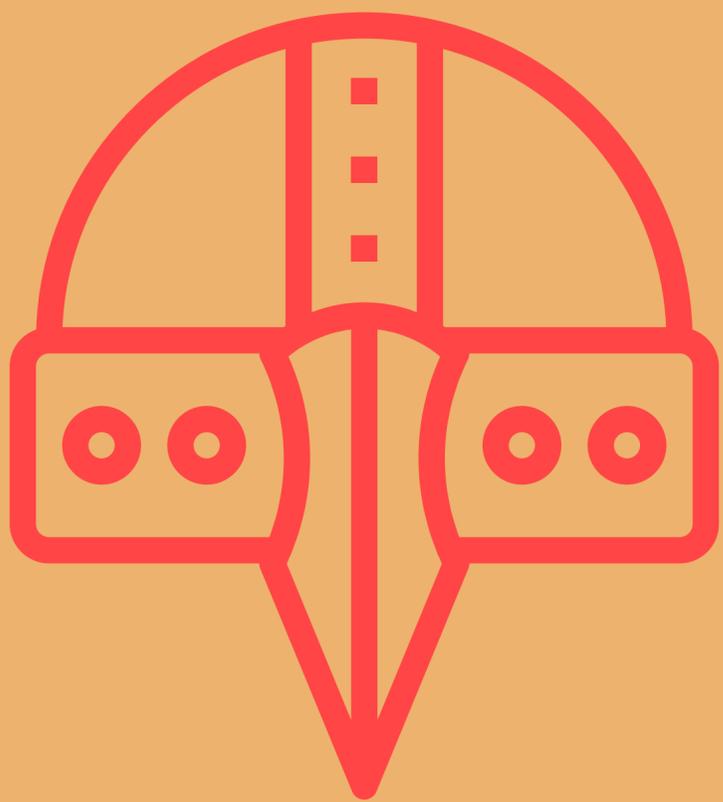


VIKING

The Vikings came from all around Scandinavia (where Norway, Sweden and Denmark are today).

Even though the Vikings didn't stay in Britain, they left a strong mark on society.

WE HAVE EXPLORED THE EVERY DAY LIFE OF THE VIKINGS, AND NOW WE WILL LOOKING AT WHAT WE FOUND OUT.



SOCIAL STRUCTURE

There were 3 main types of social class in the Viking era.

Research all 3 and write at least two sentences about each social class.

THRALLS

Were the lowest ranking class and were slaves. Slavery was of vital importance to Viking society, for everyday chores, large scale construction, trade and the economy. Servants were used in larger households on the farms, but also for construction and similar hard work projects.

KARLS

Were free peasants. They owned farms, land and cattle and engaged in daily chores like ploughing the fields, milking the cattle, building houses and wagons but used Thralls to make ends meet.

Other names were "bonde" or simply free men

JARLS

Were the aristocracy of Viking society. They were wealthy and owned large estates with huge longhouses, horses and many Thralls. The Thralls did most of the daily chores, while the Jarls did administration, politics, hunting, sports, visited other Jarls or were abroad on expeditions. When a Jarl died and was buried, his household Thralls were sometimes sacrificially killed and buried next to them, as many excavations have revealed.

APPEARANCES



Vikings put a lot of work into their appearance, and the practice of grooming was a concern for all levels of society.

Research and find out what you can about the appearances of the 3 classes of society (there is a lot of information out there about Jarls and Karls, but less so about Thralls).

THRALLS

While not a lot can be found about the appearance of Thralls, the practice of grooming was a concern for all levels of Viking society, as grooming products such as combs have been found in common graves as well as aristocratic ones.

KARLS

Karls often expressed similar tastes and hygiene to Jarls, but in a more relaxed and inexpensive way.

JARLS

Well groomed with neat hairstyles and express their wealth and status by wearing expensive clothes (often silk) and well-crafted jewellery like brooches, belt buckles, necklaces and arm rings. Almost all of the jewellery was crafted in specific designs unique to the Norse. Finger rings and earrings were seldom used.



FARMING AND CUISINE

The Sagas tell about the diet and cuisine of the Vikings. However, first hand evidence such as cesspits, kitchen middens and garbage dumps have proved to be of great value and importance in providing insight into the diet and cuisine of Vikings.

Let's do some research into the diet of Vikings to see what they liked to eat!

WHAT MEATS DID VIKINGS LIKE TO EAT?

Certain livestock were typical and unique to the Vikings, including the Icelandic horse, Icelandic cattle, a plethora of sheep breeds, the Danish hen and the Danish goose.

WHAT ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES WERE CONSUMED?

Alcoholic drinks like beer, mead, bjórr (a strong fruit wine) and for the rich; imported wine was served.

FARMING AND CUISINE



WHAT ANIMALS DID THEY GET MILK FROM?

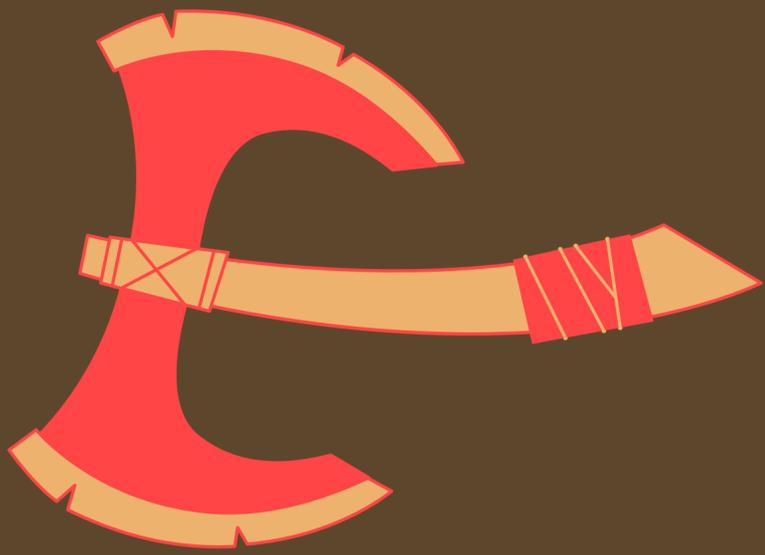
Milk and buttermilk were popular, both as cooking ingredients and drinks, but were not always available - even at farms. Milk came from cows, goats and sheep, with priorities varying from location to location.

WHAT MEAT DID THE VIKINGS IN YORK EAT?

The Vikings in York mostly ate beef, mutton and pork with small amounts of horse meat. Hens were also kept for both their meat and eggs.

WHAT FRUITS WERE COLLECTED AND CONSUMED?

Vikings collected and ate fruit, berries and nuts. Apples (wild crab apples), plums and cherries were part of the diet, as were rose hips and raspberry, wild strawberry, blackberry, elderberry, rowan and hawthorn and various wild berries.



A VIKING RECIPE

This is a recipe that the Vikings used to make Honey, Oat and Spiced Cakes.

All of the ingredients they used are still around today - why not try to follow this recipe and make the cakes?

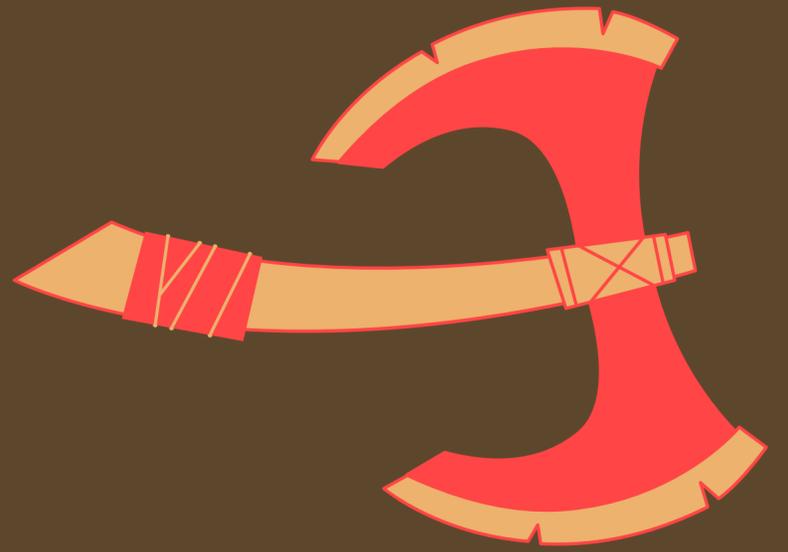
INGREDIENTS

- 250g oats (use Scottish porridge oats)
- 125g unsalted butter
- 50g chopped dride apricots or dried apples
- 4 large tablespoons of runny honey
- 1 level teaspoon of ground cinnamon

EQUIPMENT

- weighing scales
- large saucepan
- wooden spoon
- greaseproof paper
- baking sheet

A VIKING RECIPE



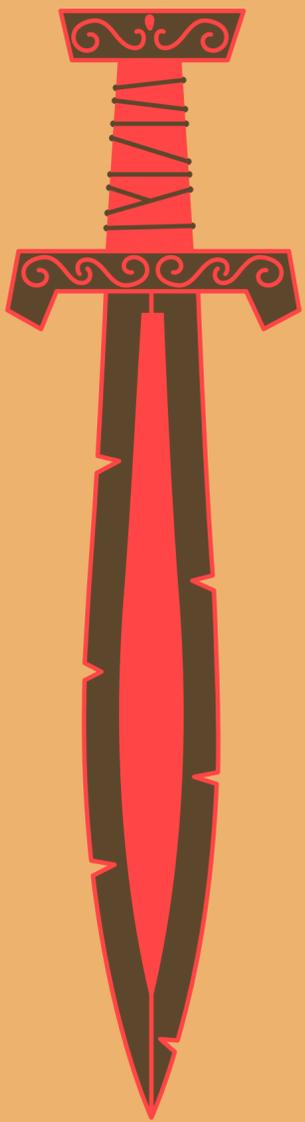
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INGREDIENTS

- preheat the oven to 180C
- in a large saucepan over a low heat, melt the butter and then remove from the heat when butter has melted
- stir in the oats, dried fruit and honey
- mix until well-mixed
- spoon dollops of the mixture onto a well-greased baking sheet and flatten slightly
- bake in the oven for 10 - 12 minutes (or until golden)
- gently lift the cakes onto a wire rack and leave to cool

Let us know if you made the cookies! Tag us on social media @westonmuseum



GLOSSARY

Throughout this research, you may have come across some new words. Let's explore the meaning of these words and write a definition in the boxes below.

THING

Was a governing assembly in early Germanic society, made up of the free people presided over by lawspeakers.

NORSE

A North Germanic ethnolinguistic group (a group that is unified by both a common ethnicity or language) of the Early Middle Ages, during which they spoke Old Norse.

SAGA

Prose stories and histories, composed in Iceland and to a lesser extent elsewhere in Scandinavia.

DRINKING VESSEL

The horn of a Bovid (bison, buffalo, sheep, goats and cattle) used as a drinking vessel.

COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS



A few of the well-known "facts" about Vikings, are not actually true! Let's explore these misconceptions by reading below.

HORNED HELMETS

Apart from two or three representations of helmets - with protrusions that may be either stylised ravens, snakes or horns - no preserved Viking helmets have horns. Viking helmets were conical, made from hard leather with wood and metallic reinforcement for regular troops. The iron helmet with mask and mail was for the chieftains.

BARBARITY

The image of wild-haired, dirty savages sometimes associated with Vikings in popular culture, is a distorted picture of reality. Viking tendencies were often misreported. The work of Adam of Bremen, among others, told largely disputable tales of Viking savagery and uncleanness.

USE OF SKULLS AS DRINKING VESSELS

There is no evidence that Vikings drank out of the skulls of vanquished enemies. This was a misconception based on a passage in the skaldic poem *Krákumál* - speaking of heroes drinking from *ór bjúgvíðum hausa* (branches of skulls). This was a reference to drinking horns - but was mistranslated in the 17th Century, as referring to the skulls of the slain.

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DID YOU KNOW?

Here are 4 facts about the Vikings that you might not have known.

1. The word "Viking" means "a pirate raid" in the Norse language - which was spoken by Vikings.
2. The Viking alphabet 'Futhark' was made up of 24 characters called Runes. Each one stood for entire words or gods, as well as sounds.
3. There was a large Viking community around York called Jorvik. Archaeologists have found out a lot about the Vikings thanks to the artefacts found there.
4. In Viking times, people usually took baths once a week! This often took place on Saturdays.

Did you already know any of these facts about the Vikings?