

Have fun at our wedding, a mix of Republican and Imperial, plebian and patrician, literal and loose, factual and fun! **For lots more on rituals, symbolism, and sources, please see the article at RomanaSum.com/papers** - Gratias!
Domina Tullia Saturnina, JdL, GdS and Caius Saturninus

“The more you know...” The Rape of the Sabine Women: When the village of Rome was first established in 753BCE, it was mostly men. They decided they needed wives, so they mass-abducted women of child-bearing age from Sabine and forced them into marriage. When the Sabines later waged war to retrieve their daughters, the women thrust themselves between their husbands (the fathers of their children) and their fathers, wanting neither to die. Some Roman wedding details refer to this legendary event.

Groom’s Clothing: Caius wears a white rectangular tunic (*tunica recta*) and *toga* – essentially the same thing he’d wear for any formal event.

Bride’s Clothing: Tullia wears only wool from head to toe. Wool was considered to contain *animus*, spirit, because it was made from a live animal, and was used for all sacred garments. It was spun and woven to be supremely airy and light in their Mediterranean climate. Components:

Flammeum - The “flame-colored” or “color of egg yolk” veil that covers the bride’s hair and shielded her face. Note her matching *luteus soccus* (slippers).

Tunica recta – White rectangular *tunica*, historically woven by the bride on a warp-weighted loom.

Cingulum: The wool belt with a Hercules knot (*nodus Herculenem*), so strong that only her husband can undo it on the night of their marriage. This is the origin of the phrase “tying the knot.” The Hercules knot was also a motif in wedding jewelry (known modernly as the square knot).

Seni Crines (or Sex Crines)– A special hairstyle of 6 braids, parted by a spear head to represent the violent capture of the Sabines, held in place by woolen bands (*vittae*). Also worn by Vestal Virgins.

Corolla - A crown of woven fragrant herbs and flowers to represent her fertility. Rosemary, verbena, marjoram, roses, violets, and lilies were used.

Gemmae - A set of Hercules knot earrings and necklace that match our rings (Tullia made them all). Wedding rings for women, worn on the 4th finger, started with the Roman monarchy period as iron bands. The ring was probably given on the engagement, not during the ceremony.

Officiants

The Pontifex Maximus (chief priest and Oregon officiant): Davide Di Francesco Dominici

The Flamen Dialis (Priest of Jupiter): Check out Doctore Decimus Varius Felix’s *apex* hat!

The Flaminica Dialis (his wife): Magistra Julia Sempronia is our *Flaminica*.

The Pronuba is the matron of honor, still married to her first husband. Our *pronuba* is Drusa Saturnina, Tullia’s freedwoman, who achieved her dream of becoming a Roman citizen when she married Tullia’s uncle-in-law Maximus Saturninus. Sadly, he angered the gods (ask us – it’s a great story) and was turned into a dog. Their love endures, as well as her citizenship.

Ceremony

The Roman marriage ceremony is called *dextrarum iunctio*, literally “joining of hands.” A sow is sacrificed to Tellus Mater (Mother Earth). The entrails are read by an *auspex* to determine the fate of the couple. The Flamen Dialis is serving as our *auspex*.

The bride unveils herself as the couple stand face to face. She says “*Ubi tu Gaius, ego Gaia*” (“Where you are the male, I am the female”). He responds “*Ubi tu Gaia, ego Gaius.*”

A contract is signed. We are inserting a ring exchange here.

The matron of honor (*pronuba*) joins the couple’s right hands.

The couple share a ritual spelt cake, after he breaks it above the bride’s head.

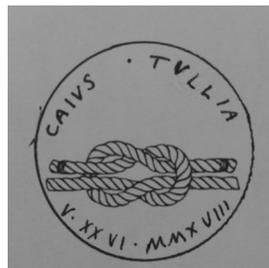
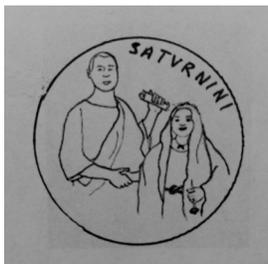
Feast

The feast would have been served at the couple’s home, after the procession. Due to a lack of space at our tent/villa, we are eating at the ceremony. Please enjoy some Roman finger foods: Olives, grapes, figs, bread, spice cookies, stuffed dates (with almonds and honey), hard boiled eggs, sausages, *libum* cakes, lamb, and of course wine. *Gratias tibi ago* to Baroness Marian Staarveld for providing most of the food as well as the decorated location.

Procession & Entering the Villa

3 boys with living mothers, the *pronuba*, and the new couple lead a joyous procession to the home. The bride carries a bouquet of spindles and distaffs to show her dedication to proper wool-working. Five white pine torches are carried to honor Ceres. The crowd lining the way throws *confetto*, honeyed nuts (especially walnuts) and dried fruit. This stuff is tasty so FEEL FREE TO EAT IT instead of throwing it. **Attendees yell “*Feliciter*” (good luck) or “*Talasio.*”** Traditionally, there are obscene songs (*fescennines*) from the men and children in the procession, but we will be skipping that since notions of appropriate behavior while running through a populated area have changed quite a bit.

At the threshold, the bride adorns the doorway posts with fat and raw wool strips. Then she is helped / carried across the threshold, in a reference to the Sabine women being forcibly carried in. The groom presents her with fire and water, the essential elements of household maintenance, saying “*Aquae et ignis communicatio* (“I give you water and fire”), and the bride touches the water and fire. She honors her new home’s *lararium* (shrine of the household gods) and takes her place as the caretaker of the *Lares* (protective gods) for her husband’s family.



Coins: The bride carries three coins on the procession: One for her new husband, symbolic of the dowry, in her hand, one for the neighborhood crossroads *Lares*, in a wallet, and one for the *Lares* in her new home, in her shoe. This is the origin of the “penny in her shoe” part of the modern wedding rhyme. We commissioned silver SCA coins: Caius is holding the marriage scroll, while

Tullia is holding a spindle, the symbol of a good wife. Working wool to clothe her family was an iconic part of a matron’s duty. SATURNINI is the plural form of the family’s last name. Art by Drusa and Tullia. Coins engraved and minted by Arion the Wanderer.