

Sherwood Pines Viking Age Food Challenge 2026

Aim

Create a food or drink item that could plausibly have been eaten in Britain during the Viking Age (c. AD 800 to 1100).

The aim of the competition is to celebrate the foodways of Viking Age Britain through historical interpretation, research and practical experimentation. The judges are looking for historical understanding and thoughtful interpretation rather than culinary complexity. A simple dish supported by sound historical reasoning may score more highly than an elaborate feast.

The Challenge

Your entry may represent any culture or community living in Britain during the Viking Age, including Anglo-Saxon, Scandinavian, Anglo-Scandinavian, Welsh, Scottish or other contemporary peoples.

Think beyond simply combining ingredients known from the period. Consider the wider influences that shaped food and drink, including geography, season, social status, culture, religion, trade, economy and occupation.

Your entry should tell the story of the people who might have prepared and eaten it.

The **Regia Food & Drink Authenticity Guide** is recommended as an excellent starting point for understanding the ingredients and evidence currently accepted within Regia Anglorum. Competitors are encouraged to build upon this foundation with their own research and interpretation when developing their entry.

Entries

- Entries may be prepared entirely at home, entirely on site, or using a combination of both.
- Food may be served hot or cold.
- Entries may be submitted by individuals or teams.
- There is no expectation that dishes should be elaborate. Simple, everyday food is just as welcome as high-status cuisine.

Judging

Entries will be judged in four areas.

Historical Foodways & Interpretation (50%)

How well does the entry reflect the chosen people, place and circumstances? Judges will consider the historical plausibility of the ingredients, preparation, serving and overall concept, together with the competitor's understanding of the wider influences that shaped the dish, including geography, seasonality, culture, religion, trade, economy, occupation and social status.

Judging will be informed by the **Regia Food & Drink Authenticity Guide**, which will provide the starting point for assessing ingredient suitability and the current evidence accepted within Regia Anglorum. Competitors are encouraged to build upon this foundation through their own historical reasoning and interpretation.

Taste (20%)

Is the food enjoyable to eat and appropriate for the type of dish being presented?

Presentation (15%)

Does the presentation suit the interpretation? This includes serving vessels, utensils and the overall appearance of the dish. Appropriate simplicity is encouraged, and entries will be judged according to what is appropriate for the food being presented rather than against a single standard.

Discussion & Knowledge (15%)

Competitors should be prepared to discuss their entry with the judges, explaining the thinking behind their choices and answering any questions about the historical context and interpretation.

Keeping the Judges Alive

Competitors are responsible for ensuring that their food is prepared, transported and stored safely.

Any competitor who causes the judges to become ill will, quite understandably, receive very few points... assuming the judges recover sufficiently to finish the competition.

Remember

The judges are **not** looking for the most expensive ingredients, the most complicated recipe or the most impressive feast.

The winning entry will be the one that best combines historical understanding, thoughtful interpretation and enjoyable food, regardless of how simple or elaborate the dish may be.

Prize

A prize will be awarded to the winner of the Sherwood Pines Viking Age Food Challenge 2026. The prize will be a practical, re-enactment related item suitable for use within Viking Age and early medieval living history.