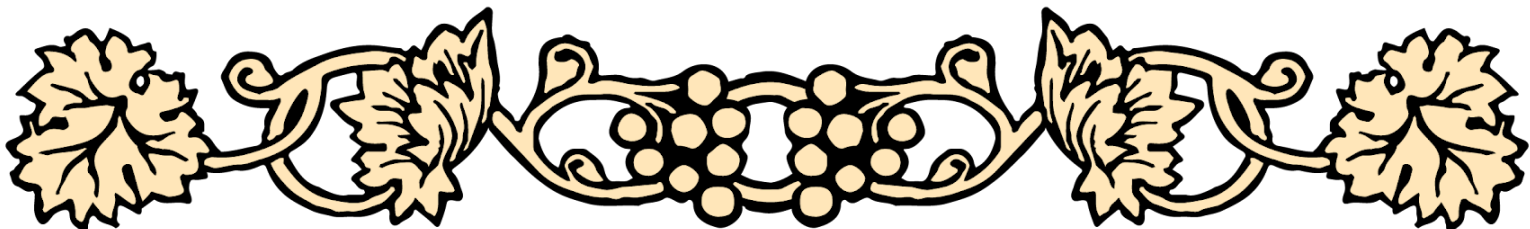




Kit &
Costume Guide

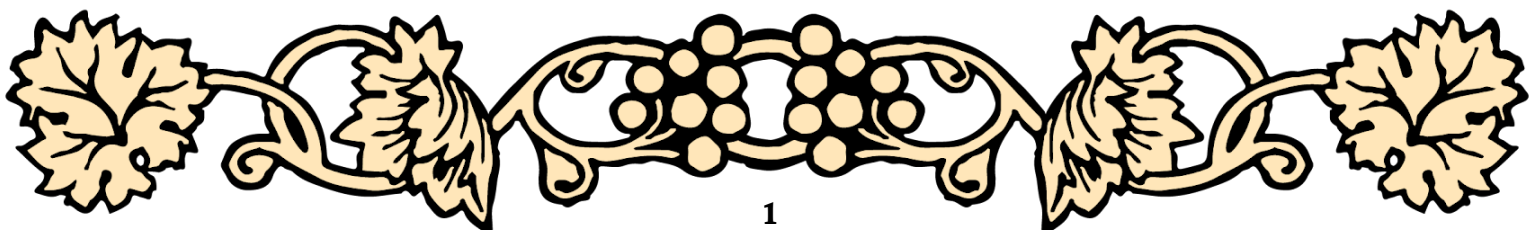
A DANCE OF RIBBONS II

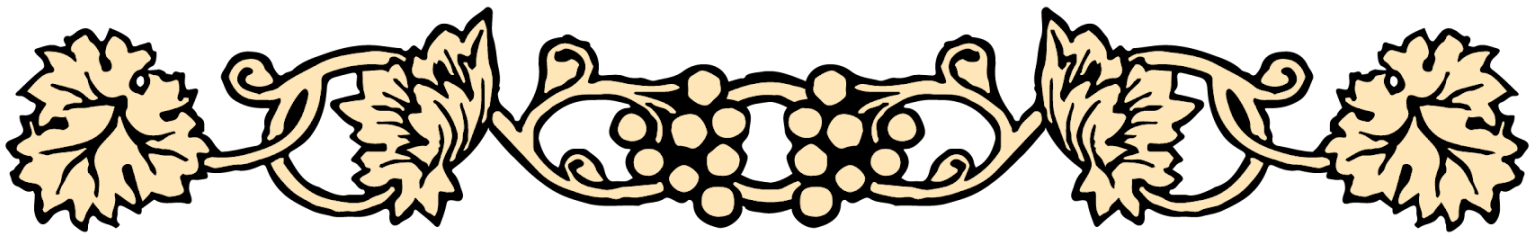
Comprehensive
Handbook



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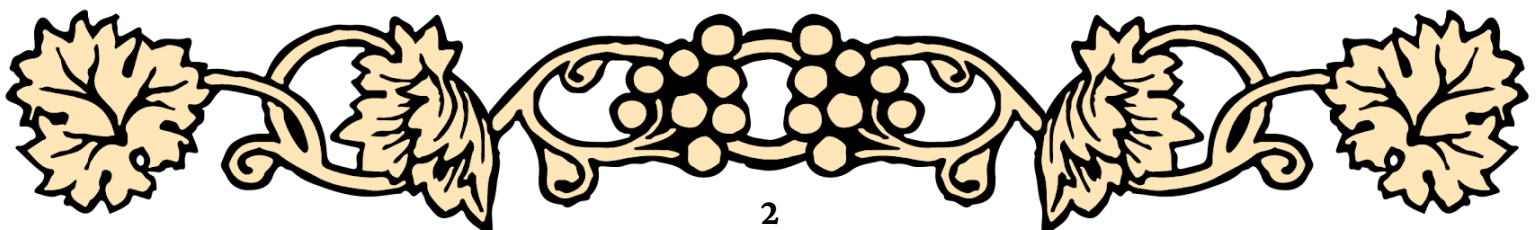
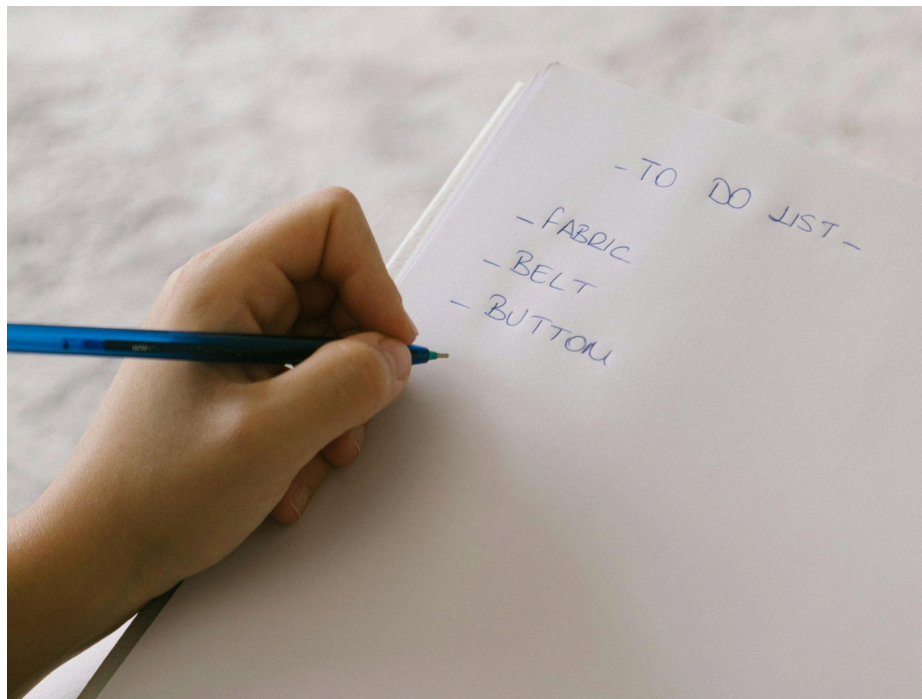


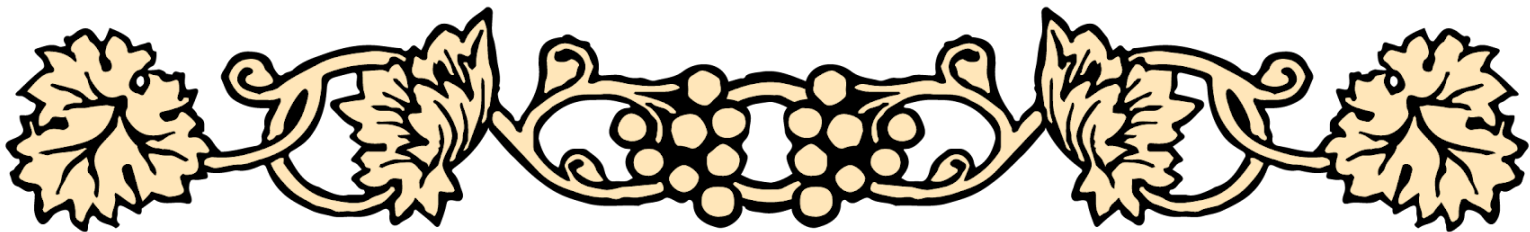
Welcome to the Kit and Costume guide!

Never made a costume for a LARP before? Wondering how 'dressed up' you need to be for *A Dance of Ribbons*? Or are you a seasoned LARPer looking for inspiration on which direction to take your crafting? This is the guide for you.

Your costume, sometimes called your soft kit, is one of the primary ways to immerse yourself in and project a story about your character. Like the cover of a book, your soft kit reflects the history, the wealth, and the affiliations of your character.

In this guide, we'll pose some questions to get you thinking about what you might wear, provide some inspiration for the various Vicarian Clans and Garmont Cantons with their Pinterest boards, and offer guidance on how to source and/or craft the clothing your character might wear. However, note that this guide should not be viewed as comprehensive, but rather, as a starting place for those thinking about how to dress as their characters.





Before we begin

Culture and Costume!

The worlds of Garmont and Vicaria exist within a euro-centric lens, but that shouldn't stop us from exploring beyond this mode. Garmont takes a lot of inspiration from 15-17th century Dutch, Swiss and German dress and on the flip side, Vicaria sits on a wide variety of pre-Christian Celtic and Slavic design.

But we are a diverse community and we want to see it! Consider this costume guide a source of inspiration that you can build upon and adapt. But just that, inspiration, not a restriction.

We highly encourage members of our community to express their own personal heritage/culture/ancestry within their own costumes. Much like the hit series Bridgerton managed to combine various African and South Asian aesthetics with 18th Century regency, we too would encourage people to mix, match and meld as they wished! On that note, we would ask you to avoid areas of cultural appropriation. Here are some helpful resources if you need guidance:

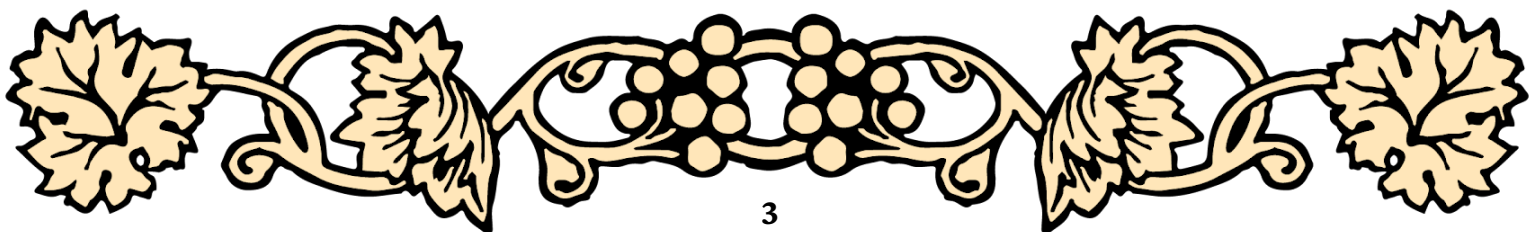
- ❖ [Appropriation and Appreciation: What's the Difference?](#)
- ❖ [Appreciating Aboriginal Culture vs Appropriation](#)

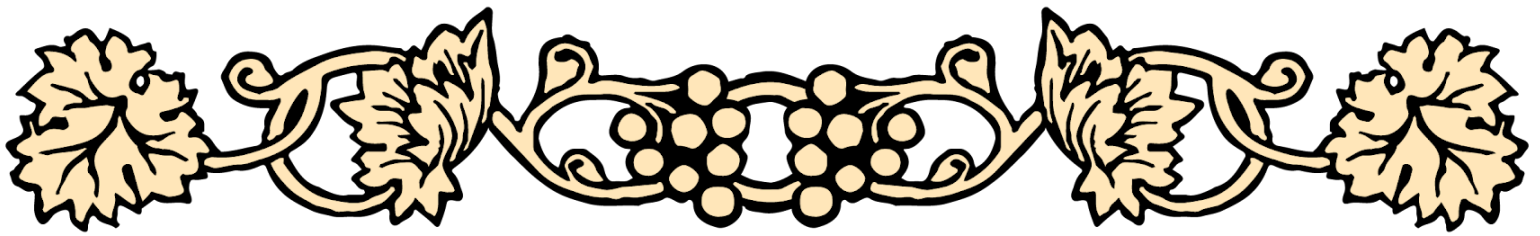
Our world is a fantasy world, bring whatever you'd like from your own lived experience to our shared story. It will make our game all the richer.

Accents

Using a different accent in LARP is one of the simplest ways to immerse yourself in a new world. However, it's common for the array of voices to primarily feature English, Irish, Scottish, or Welsh accents. We would like to encourage players to expand their perceptions of what fantasy looks and sounds like. A non-European accent has just as much place in fantasy as an Irish accent, provided that it aligns with your cultural background and maintains respect.

If you feel uncomfortable or uninterested in using a different accent during the game for any reason, your natural accent is wonderful and welcomed!





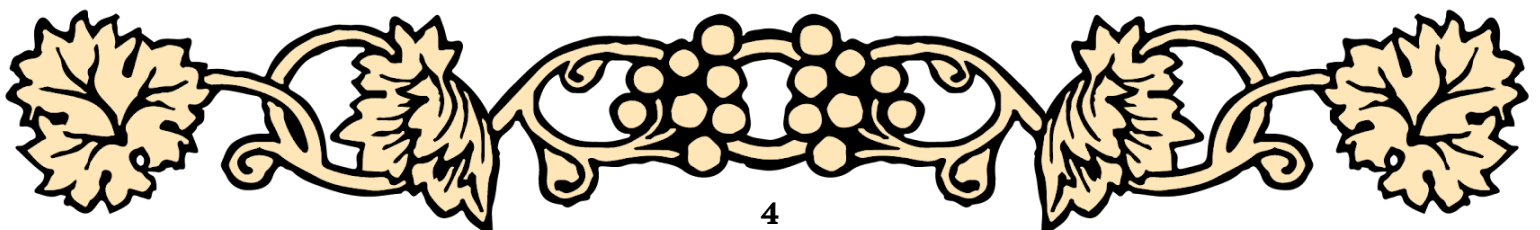
Fantasy Level

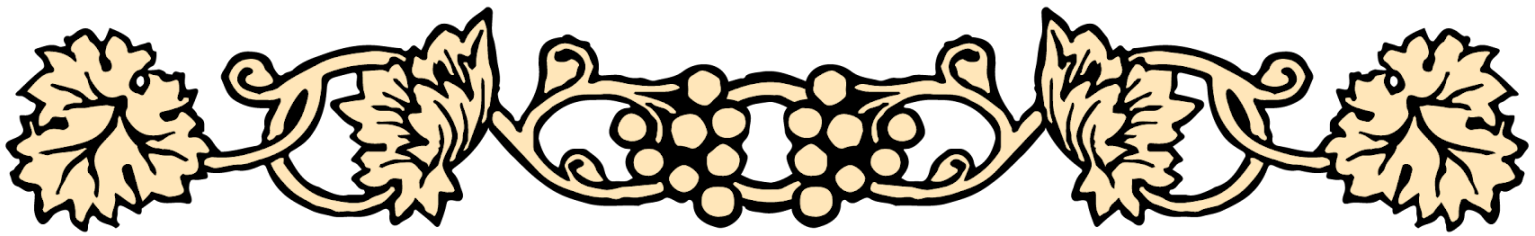


However, it is terrible and scary. Most 'magic' exists as a deep knowledge of nature. People who somehow know when an eclipse will arrive, or what herbs heal what ailments. Then there are those that know the magic of physics, maths, and science!

In regards to costume, when designing your kit, consider this style of low/medium fantasy. You're more than welcome to have 'talismans' or 'magical charms' that could be considered superstitious. But don't bring horns or fangs. Keep things realistic. If you want a good example of the level of magic we have in this world, think Game of Thrones. It exists, but is very rare.

While DoR is set in a fantasy world, we are playing within a world with low/medium magic. Everyone attending the game will be playing humans. There's no trolls, orcs, elves, pixies, they have long since disappeared from this world. Magic exists, yes!





Practical Notes

Weather

Wet Weather

The Wurundjeri people teach us that August is Guling Season - when guling (orchids) and wattles are coming into bloom. While the Guling season is typically drier than the wet Waring season that starts in September, we can still expect some chilly days, frosty nights, and the classic variable Naarm weather.

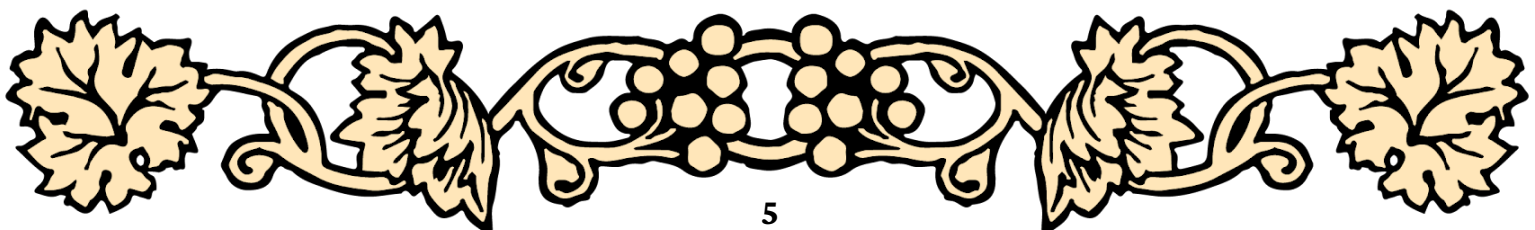
As you are creating your costume, we recommend incorporating a few simple layers that can be added or removed depending on the temperature. Additionally, we recommend either a waterproof outer layer or a woollen outer layer, as wool retains warmth even when damp, unlike other fabrics.

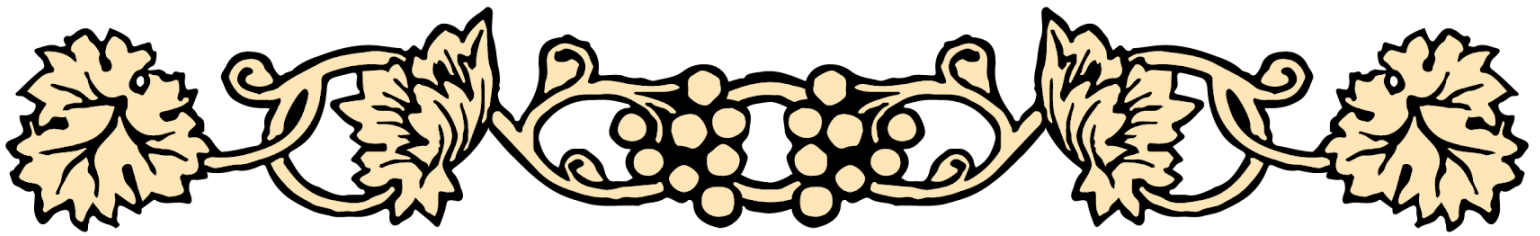
Although we'll provide numerous undercover areas at the LARP, including tents, buildings, and outdoor shelters, it's wise to prepare for wet weather since you'll likely want to move around the site, and there's always a chance of rain!

We recommend wearing a sturdy and comfortable pair of boots and bringing multiple pairs of socks. There's nothing worse than two-day-old soggy socks.

Heat

We recommend bringing some form of headwear for sun protection, as well as personal sunscreen that you can keep with you. Although it will be winter, UV levels can still get high and we want to avoid sunburns!





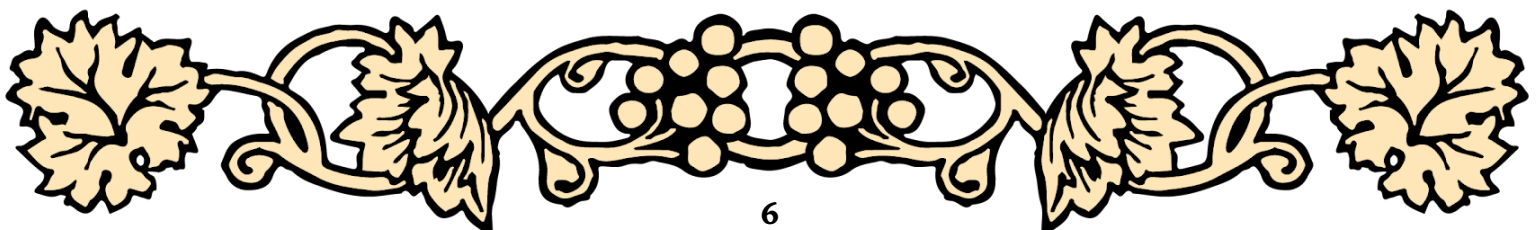
Hydration

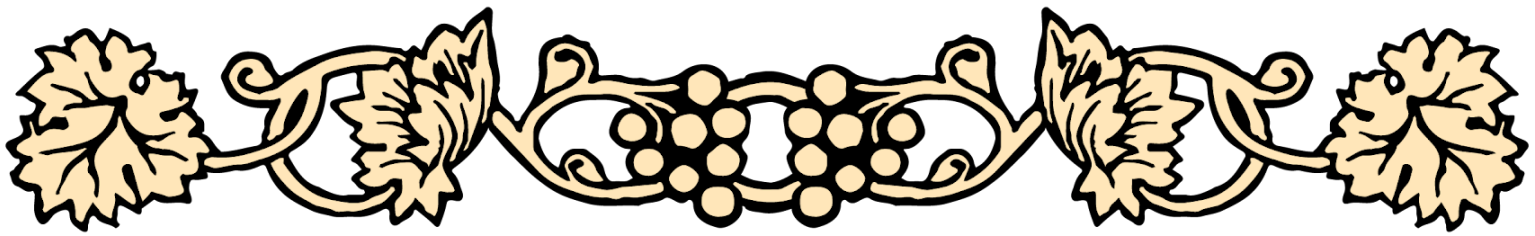
LARPing can be quite active, and it's easy to get caught up in playing and forget about the simple things - like staying hydrated! We recommend sourcing a LARP-appropriate water bottle, waterskin, or another method of carrying water with you throughout the day.

Modern water bottles can be disguised to appear immersive when wrapped in leather or cloth. Alternatively, you can find historical horns, gourds, or leather water bottles at op shops or LARP stores.

Of Science And Swords offers a good basic waterskin for around \$20. You can find it at the link [here](#)

Anything similar will work!





Pronoun Petals

A Dance Of Ribbons will be providing an optional system to communicate a character's (not player's) pronouns in game.

We call these 'pronoun petals'!

At check-in, we will be providing small petal-shaped pieces of fabric along with safety pins for attaching them to costumes. These pieces of fabric come in four different colours, which you can use to help other players identify your character's pronouns without asking.

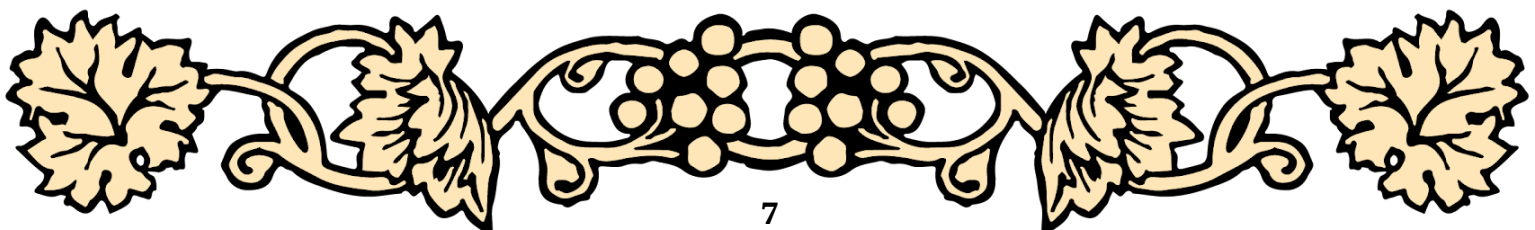
The colours correspond to the following pronouns:

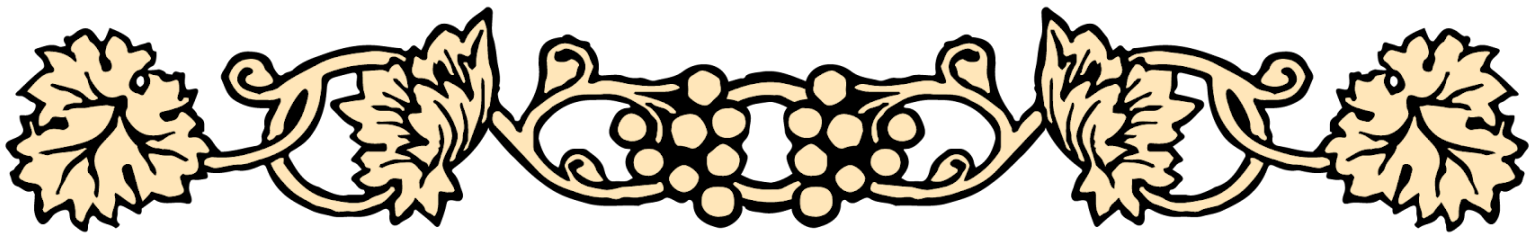
- ❖ PINK: she/her
- ❖ BLUE: he/him
- ❖ GREEN: they/them
- ❖ PURPLE: please ask my character what their pronouns are

If your character uses multiple sets of pronouns, you can pin multiple pronoun petals to your costume.

For example, if your character uses she/her and they/them pronouns, you can pin both a pink and a green pronoun petal to your costume.

You can change your pronoun petals at any time and for any reason! We'll have spares available in our team space at the LARP.





The Basics

At *A Dance Of Ribbons*, we're not exploring any kind of gendered rules or power dynamics, so feel free to use any combination of masculine or feminine fashion, regardless of you or your character's gender identity.

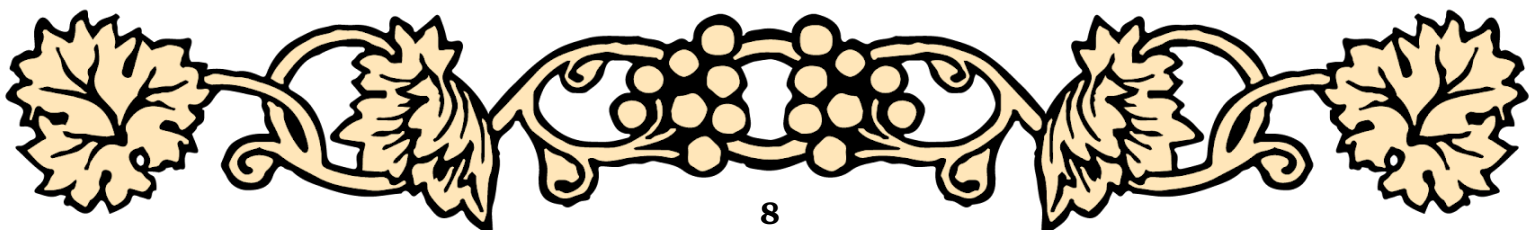
The Simple Version

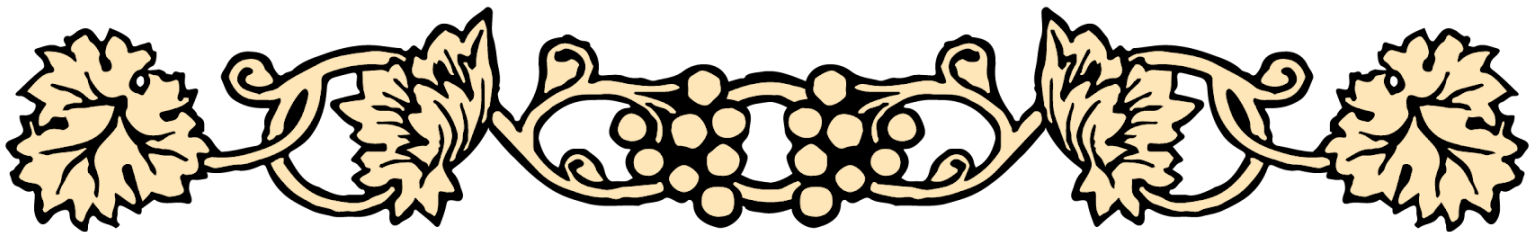
LARP gear is often very expensive or otherwise time consuming to create. We don't want your costume to be a source of stress. If time, money, or life gets in the way, here's the simple version, which is more than enough to enjoy the world of *A Dance Of Ribbons*!

- ❖ A white or off-white shirt
- ❖ Some linen pants
- ❖ A belt
- ❖ Some sturdy boots
- ❖ A warm outer layer (an appropriate blanket makes a great cloak)



Here, Eli is wearing all thrifted/cheap clothing and accessories. They are wearing thermals underneath to account for the cold weather. The bag is a handbag with the strap wrapped around the waist. Adding a coloured accessory can indicate to other players which clan or canton you belong to, and can be styled in fun ways. For example, a yellow blanket can signify belonging to Kilkern, while a green scarf can represent belonging to Vaud.





Later in this guide, there will be more ideas on how to dress according to Vicarian or Garmontian styles or more specific to your class. However, we want to stress that the basics, with a pop of colour, is enough!

Material

Try to steer away from “modern” plastic-based fabrics like polyester or nylon. Not only do they have a distinctly modern feeling about them, they are often not breathable, hot, sweaty, sticky, and stinky. Natural materials like linen, some cotton blends, wool, and silk are your friends!

Op-shops are fantastic for sourcing affordable costume pieces. Belts are a fantastic tool for adding shape and texture to an outfit - simply whack a couple of belts on and watch your costume transform.

Ribbons



In *A Dance of Ribbons*, your character’s health - physical and spiritual - is represented by a ribbon of red crochet.

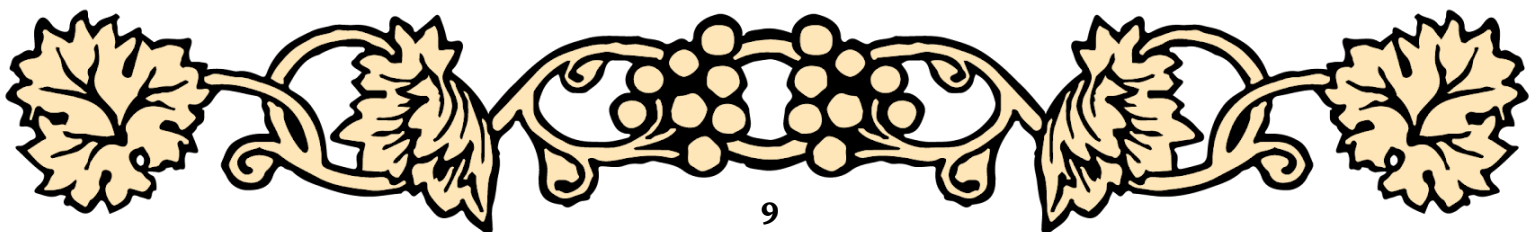
Every player will be provided with this ribbon. The ribbons will be crocheted onto an approximately 30cm long piece of leather cord. Players must display it on their person in a location easily accessible to Game Masters, should their health decrease for any reason.

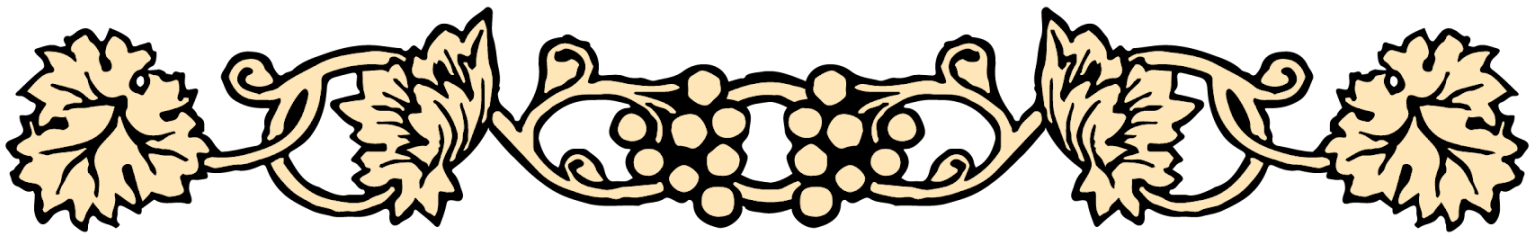
Great options for displaying the ribbon include tying it onto a belt, a shoulder sash, or even a necklace. Please don’t be tempted to hide your health ribbon in your costume - it won’t stop you from taking damage.

Armour

Armour is also represented by ribbons. If your character has access to armour, you’ll receive a silver ribbon to attach somewhere on your costume for easy visibility to a GM.

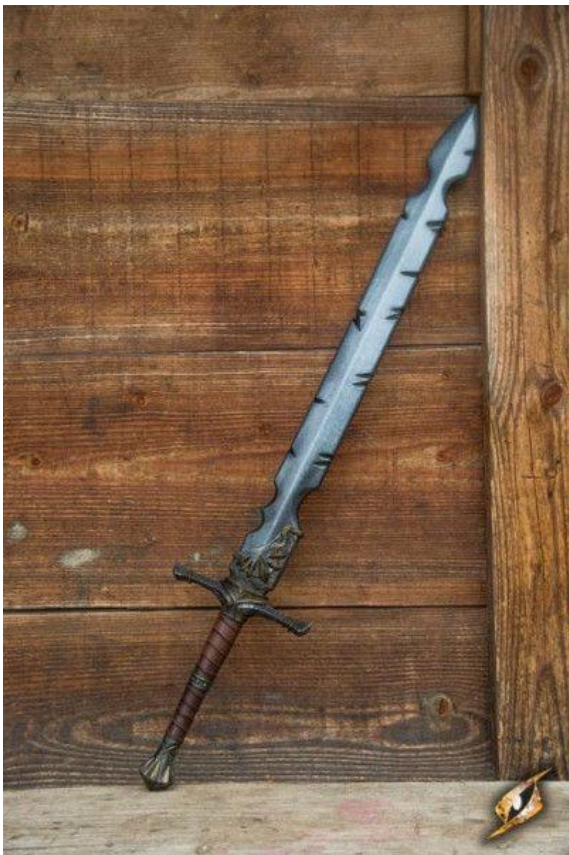
This means that if your character has armour, you don’t need to go and spend \$400 on a breastplate to represent it - unless you want to! Otherwise, the silver ribbon is sufficient, and is the only requirement to gain the mechanical advantages of armour.



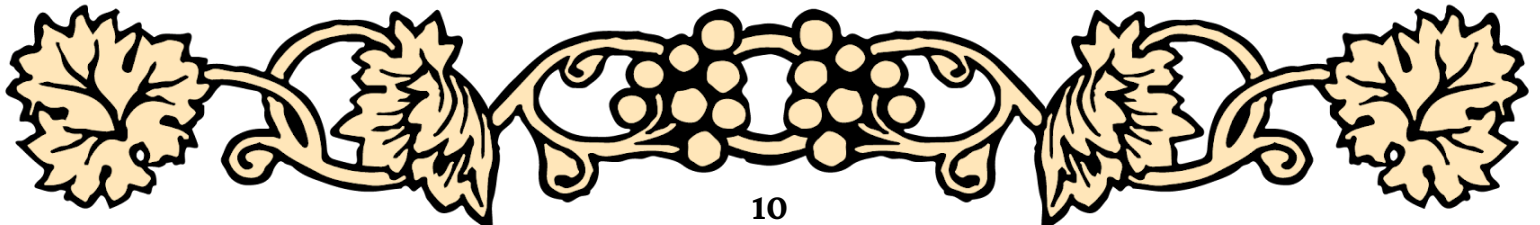


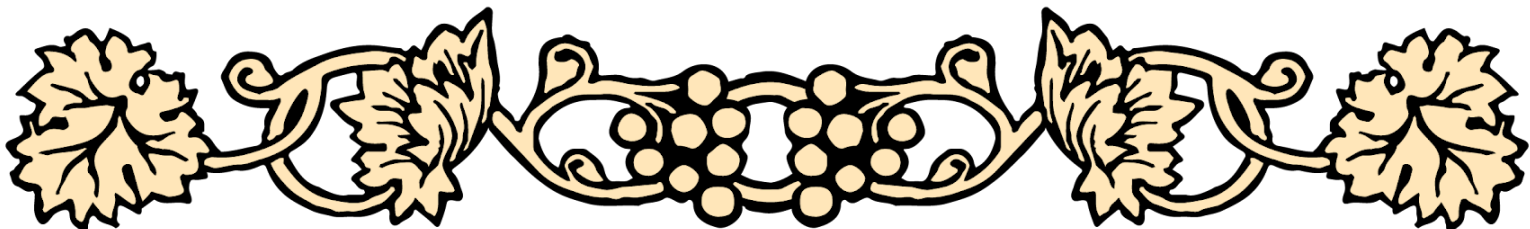
LARP-Safe Weapons

Any weapons your character might use must be LARP-safe. This means that, if anyone is hit with this weapon, it will not injure them. LARP-safe weapons such as swords or daggers have to be foam or latex replicas. Our game does not include ranged weapons such as bows or replica guns and flintlocks. If you have a weapon you want to use but are unsure about, please bring it to a workshop or get it checked with one of our organisers on the opening day of the Dance.



What we consider LARP-safe takes guidance from Swordcraft - a big thanks to their setting of clear safety standards!





Key Inspirations

Pinterests

Looking for some visual inspiration? Below are our ever-growing Pinterest boards, with pictures to inspire the two major cultural groups. (In our section on Faction colours, you'll find additional Pinterest boards for each specific clan and canton)

Garmont: pinterest.com.au/danceofribbons/garmont/

Vicaria: pinterest.com.au/danceofribbons/vicaria/

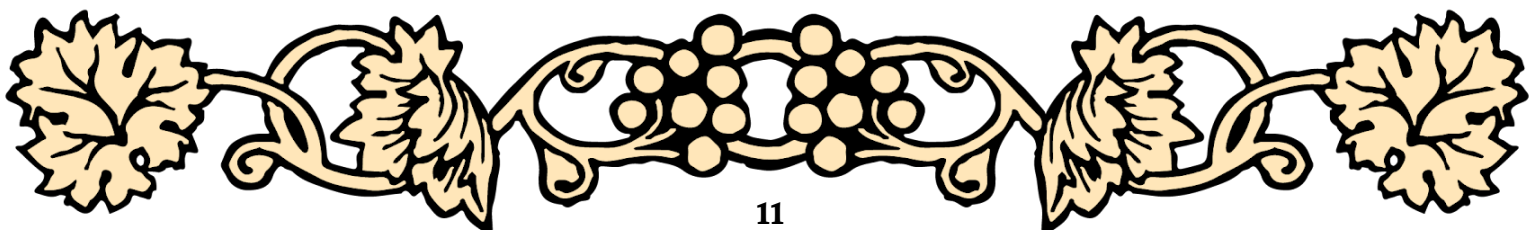
Garmont

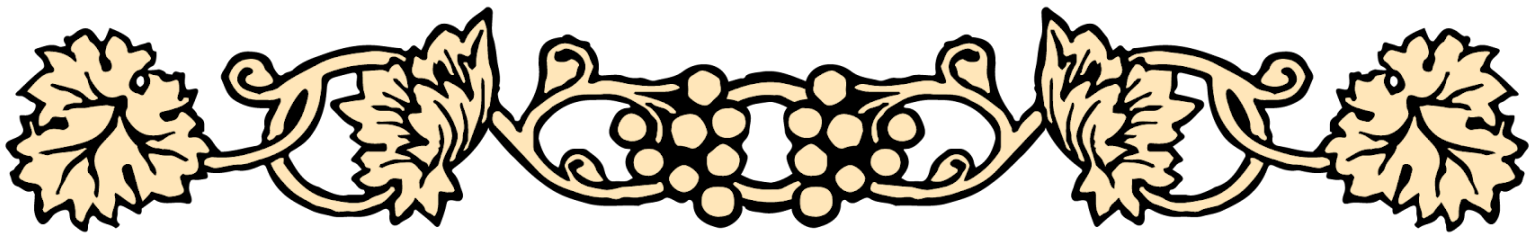


Garmont was originally heavily inspired by several key regions - the Swiss and Dutch nations and cantons of the mid-17th century. Rembrandt's *The Night Watch* provides a good example of what soldiers and nobles of the Cantons might look like - but a reminder here that other cultural influences are appropriate.

Garmontian fashion incorporates a variety of headwear and scarves. Typically, Garmontians use brighter and stronger colours than the Vicarians, as a result of their use of stronger and more pigmented dyes. Garmontians have a strong wealth disparity amongst classes, and this is apparent in their fashion. Wealthier individuals flaunt their riches with extravagant robes and jewellery, while poorer members of society often wear simpler and more practical attire.

Masculine fashion leans towards big, broad-brimmed hats, lace collars, tricorns, and doublets, featuring boxy silhouettes and high collars. Feminine fashion tends towards headwear, scarves, and bodice dresses with long skirts. The predominant fabrics are linen, cotton and wool.



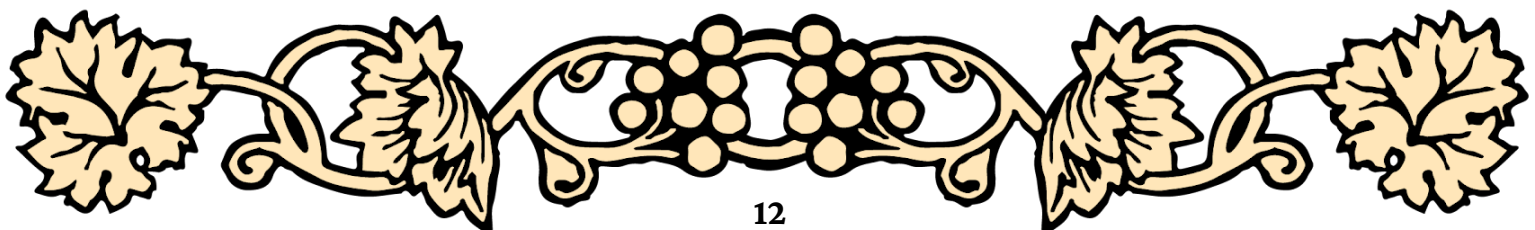


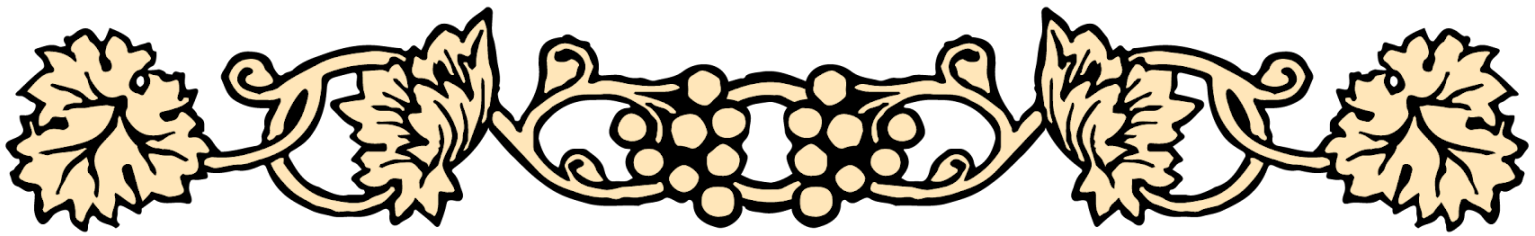
Vicaria

The world of Vicaria is intended to be quite strange to our capitalist society. They worship, engage, and work with nature differently, where hierarchy of the pyramid is inverted or abolished altogether. Our real world inspirations began with a pre-Christian Europe and the romantic notions of such a world, drawing elements from Celtic, Irish, Scottish and Slavic folklore and their connections to nature. Again, this was our starting point - any differing cultural influences are appropriate!

Vicarians inhabit colder climates and favour wools in dark and natural colours. Jewellery and gold is highly prized and shown often. Bands, brooches, gems, and crowns are prevalent across all levels of their social structure. Vicarians prize the natural, and often tie in religious aspects and natural materials into their jewellery.

Vicarians tend not to distinguish between feminine and masculine styles. For historical context, we're looking at a late Viking inspired world with Byzantine infusion. Lots of furs, wool, plaid and leather, along with intricate embroidery wherever possible. Lots of skirts, layers, and long drapes of fabric. Some Vicarians, such as those from Kilkern, draw inspiration from Garmontian attire, incorporating doublets and courtly dresses.



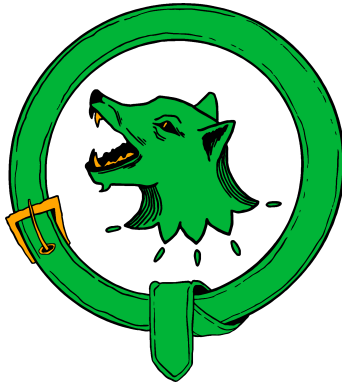


Faction Colours

Colour is an excellent way to help identify other members of your Clan or Canton. However, this doesn't mean your whole kit has to be that colour - far from it! For instance, if you're from Vaud, incorporating a green ribbon in your hair, a green blanket as a cloak, or even green face paint are all great ways to identify yourself with your group.

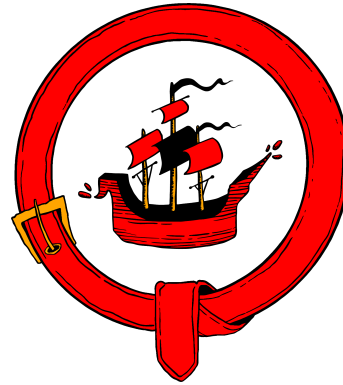
If you're extra keen, feel free to find a way to tie the symbol of your Clan or Canton into your costume. Last year, a player crocheted a small tapestry of the symbol of Dunmoore to hang from their belt, while another player from Vaud used a wolfskin as part of their costume. Have fun with it!

Vaud



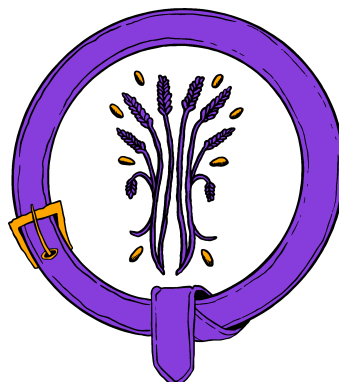
One of the three Cantons of Garmont
Vaud's pinterest board [here](#)

Gottenburg

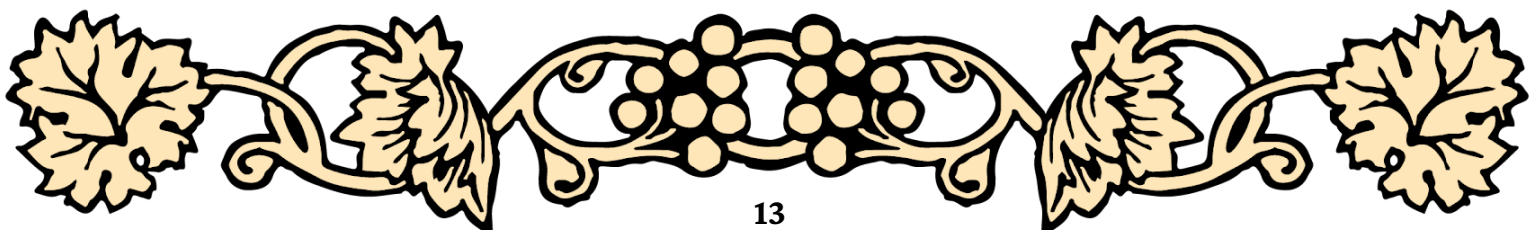


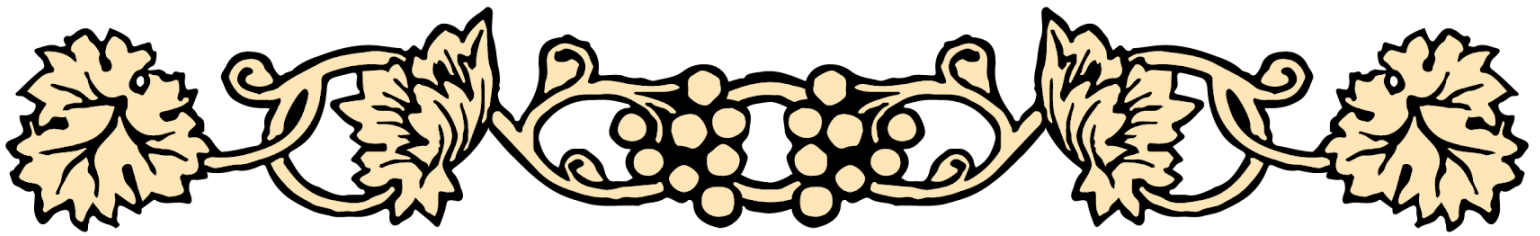
One of the three Cantons of Garmont
Gottenburg's pinterest board [here](#)

Straussland

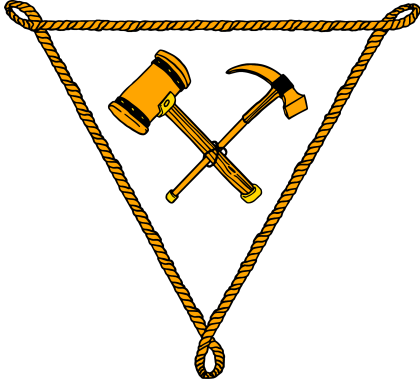


One of the three Cantons of Garmont
Straussland's pinterest board [here](#)



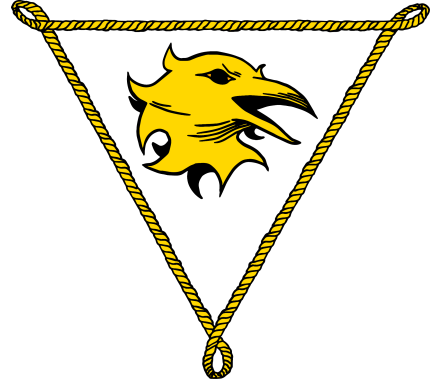


Dunmoore



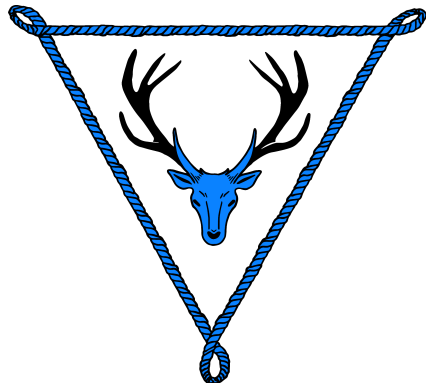
One of the three Vicarian Clans
Dunmoore's pinterest board [here](#)

Kilkern

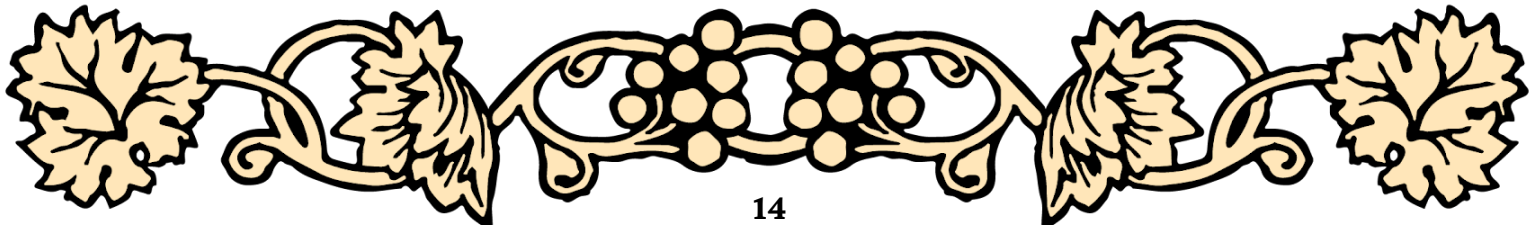


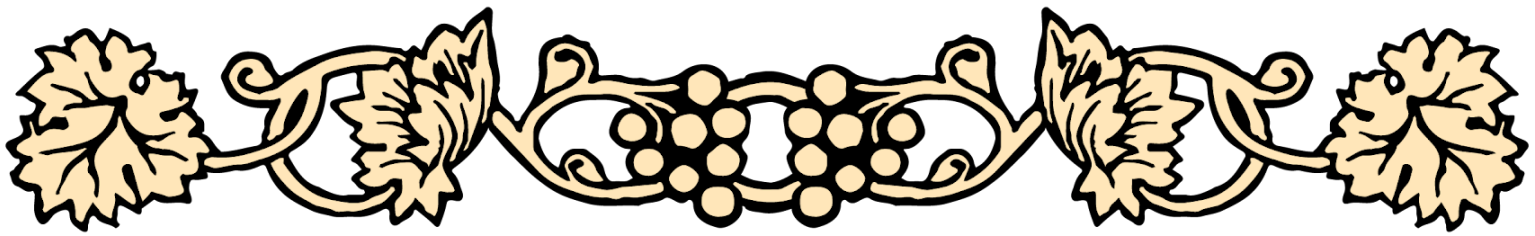
One of the three Vicarian Clans
Kilkern's pinterest board [here](#)

Hathwood



One of three Vicarian Clans
Hathwood's pinterest board [here](#)





Further Costume Development

Below are some questions that might help guide you as you think about what you might wear. You might find inspiration from all of these questions, or perhaps just one of them. Either way, use these as a way to start really fleshing out how your character will look.

Wealth

- ❖ If your character is embedded in a social hierarchy, how can this be shown with their clothes?
- ❖ Are they wealthy or poor?
- ❖ Are their clothes new, or well worn?



Occupation

- ❖ What sort of features are necessary and practical for your character to perform their job?
- ❖ Are they a medicus carrying their tools for healing? Do they require a knapsack of items to sell as a merchant?

Daily Activities

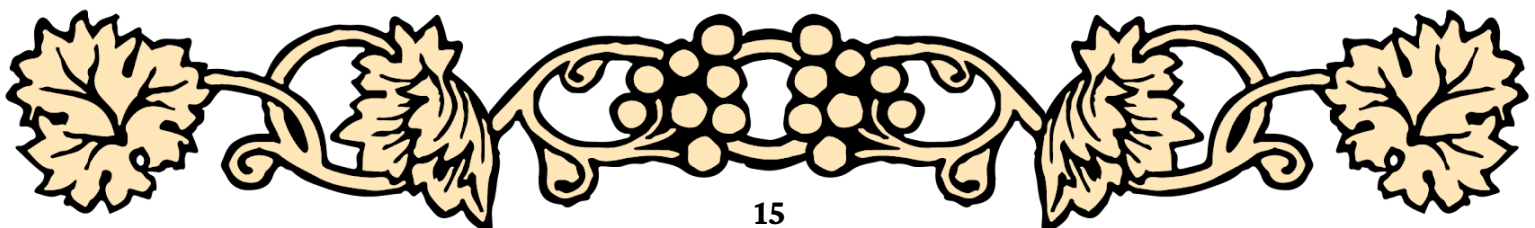
- ❖ Do they need an apron for kitchen work? Solid boots for patrolling town vs soft shoes for sitting at home? Are they spending their time in the elements and therefore work best with versatile layers?
- ❖ Have they just travelled to a festival? How long was the journey? What did they bring?
- ❖ Are they literate? Do they carry writing implements?

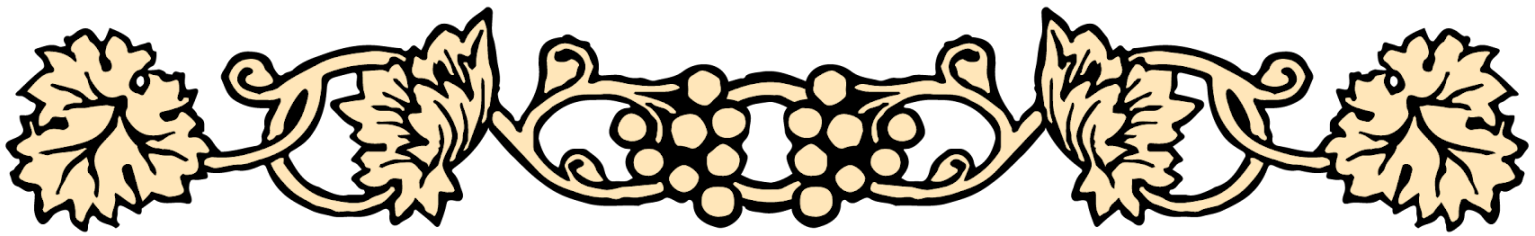
Religion/Societal Memberships

- ❖ Which god/s does your character follow and how would they show their devotion?
- ❖ Are they superstitious?
- ❖ Would they be open about their religion in their kit or is it a private display?
- ❖ Would your character signify their clan/canton through kit (ie patches, colours)?

Personal History

- ❖ Is your character's life different now to what they previously led? How would this affect their choice of clothing?
- ❖ Have they changed out of necessity or do they finally have the freedom to explore styles they couldn't previously?
- ❖ Are they required to wear certain things because of their background?
- ❖ Do they have any sentimental attachments to their clothing, or a particular item of clothing?





What are you at the festival to do?

- ❖ What is happening to your player in the here and now?
- ❖ Have you come all this way with a goal in mind and what do you have on your person to achieve it?
- ❖ Are you here for revenge and need a concealed dagger or a vial to hold poisons?
- ❖ Do you wish to marry, and with you, you've brought a gift to win your future love's heart, or an additional outfit for a marriage ceremony?



Remember the most interesting thing about your character is what they are actually doing at the event, use your kit to help support your goals.

Some Tips and Tricks

Layering

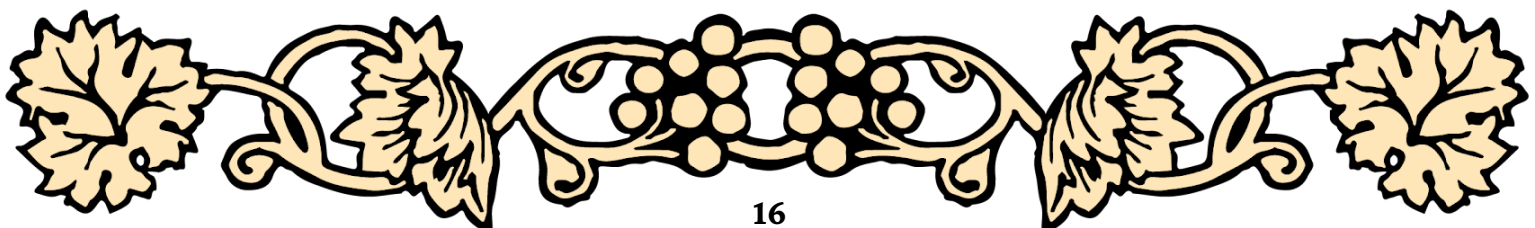
While having one 'hero' piece of kit can be really great, considering the layers you'll wear is an excellent way to add detail to your outfits. Layering also offers practical benefits—if you're cold, you can add a layer; if you're hot, you can take one off.

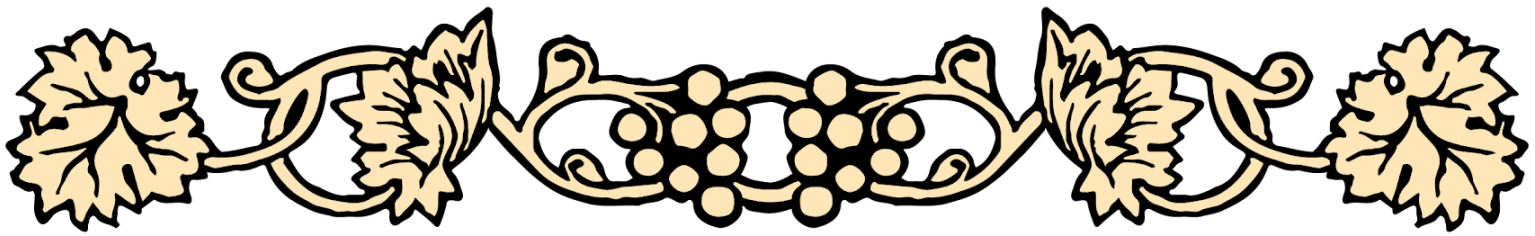
Trinkets or 'bits'

Consider what trinkets, bits of jewellery, badges, rings, or piercings are significant to your character. Can these serve as focal points for your character's identity?

Keep practicality in mind

As mentioned earlier in the guide, we want you to stay dry, warm, hydrated, and sun safe. Keep asking yourself: Will I be able to do everything I want to do in this costume? Can I comfortably carry all my trinkets? What about writing implements, if my character uses them?





Crafting Kit

Crafting is not for everyone, but if you're thinking about sewing or crafting something to wear, below are a few beginner and intermediate projects you might find fun to try your hand at in the form of video guides, followed by some written sewing guides.

Video guides

These videos are a great start for beginner sewing projects. The first shows a great technique of pattern cloning from your own clothing. If you have a garment that fits well, why not make a copy? Or, why not make and adapt a pattern to fit a more LARP focused soft kit need!

WithWendy cloning your clothes

Wendy has two great videos that help you start thinking about pattern making from clothes you already own. These guides are great for pattern drafting - that is, making a cutout for shirts and shorts that are your accurate size, which you can adapt for all kinds of garments.

The first has you making patterns from t-shirts and shorts:

youtube.com/watch?v=KeJjB-bdzuI

The second has you making patterns from a few other garments in your wardrobe:

youtube.com/watch?v=KnoTOC7yntY

Bernadette Banner

She makes a lot of complex hand sewn garments based on 18th and 19th century wear, however her Pirate Shirt is a great start if you've never sewn before and want to make something practical!

youtube.com/watch?v=Ql9r8UKIvZs

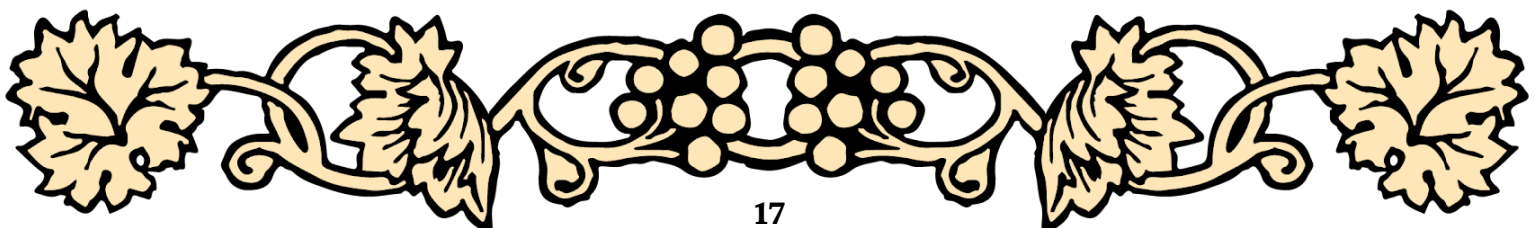
Morgan Donner

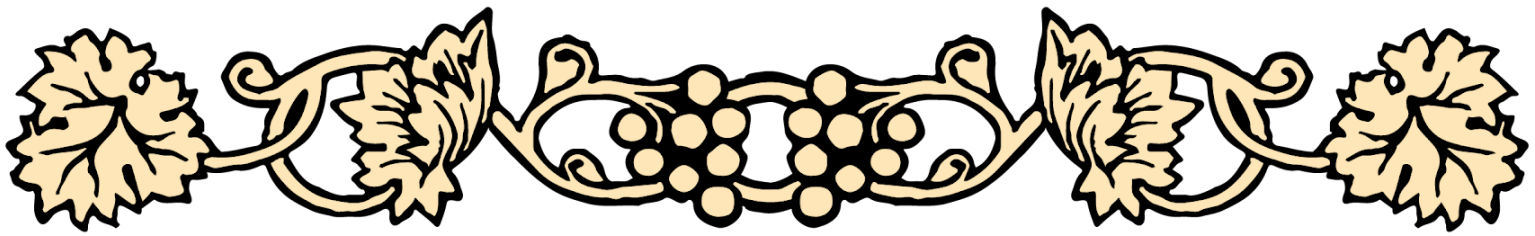
She makes a host of garments for men and women, and instructs you in how! Her hood guide, her cloak guide, her hose guide - all recommended. Explore her back catalogue of videos for patterns and guides!

youtube.com/@MorganDonner/videos

Some useful guides:

- ❖ Hose: youtu.be/sdGUVb0qe2s
- ❖ Hood: youtube.com/watch?v=LFBW_aGnxyE
- ❖ Shift/Underdress: youtu.be/OK4wwQlML8I
- ❖ Simple Medieval Shirt: youtu.be/7lsQL4SbekE





Written Guides

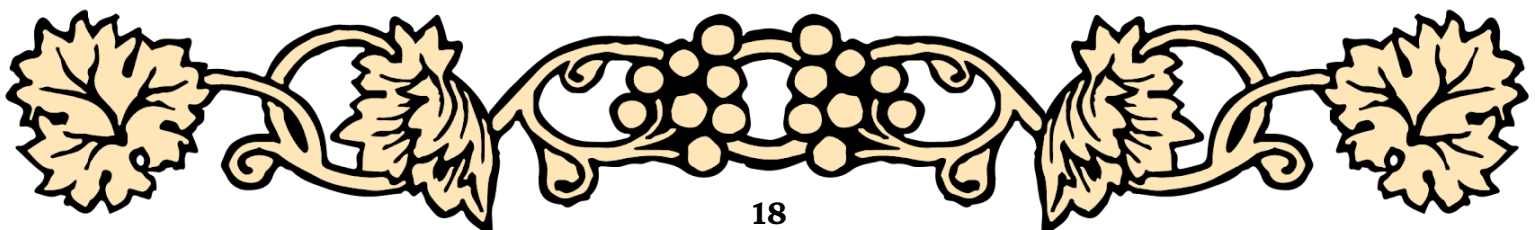
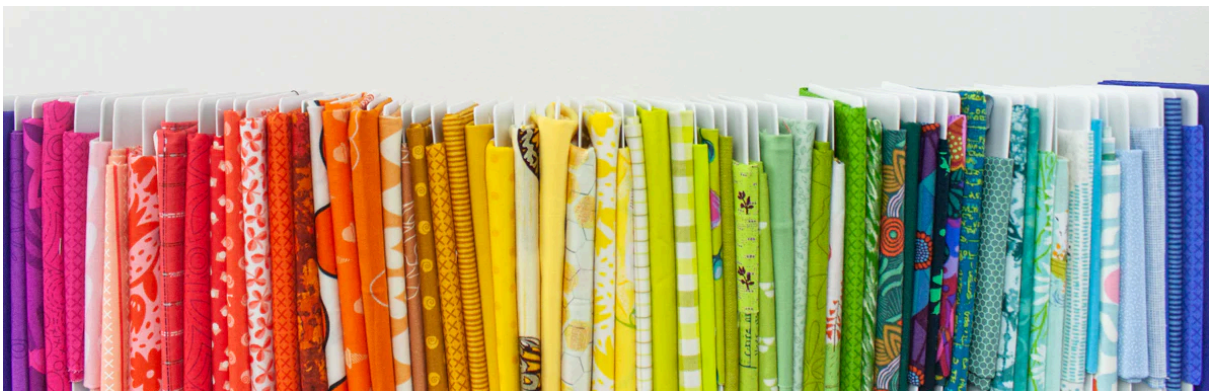
Medieval Tailor's Assistant - strony.toya.net.pl/~kuswir/MTA.pdf

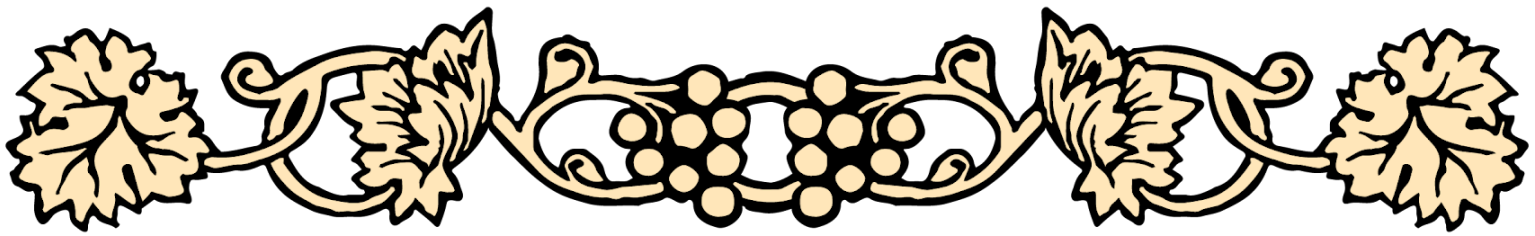
A free book of patterns, with some great examples of outfits from the mediaeval period. Whilst much of this is based on a standard body block (a template set of patterns you're instructed to make at the beginning of the book), many of the patterns can be adapted from already owned clothes using some of the clothing cloning methods in the WithWendy videos above.

Sourcing Material

If you're trying some crafting, below are some recommended fabrics at relatively cheap prices which you might consider crafting with. We generally recommend wool for outer layers as it is warm, water resistant, and smell resistant.

- ❖ Spotlight Calico - a really cheap fabric, great for trying out some sewing for the first time. Good for shirts (however, can be a bit scratchy)
- ❖ Spotlight Linen/Cotton Blend - Great for shirts and braies
- ❖ Spotlight Wool Blends - light wool, great for mid-layers
- ❖ Supercheap Fabrics - lighter wools, great for mid-layers like doublets and hose
- ❖ Vardham - Heavy wool, great for outer wool layers such as cloaks and coats:
vardhman.com.au/fabric/wool-fabric





Sourcing Kit

Not enough time for crafting? Much of what you may wish to wear can also be sourced, with a little bit of creative searching. Whilst the below is not a comprehensive list, these links are a good start to some places where you can find both clothing and accessories.

First and foremost however: check your local op-shop! Op-shops are great for clothing, accessories, and all kinds of props. Facebook Marketplace and Gumtree are also a treasure trove of possible kit, so be sure to check them out for any bargains that may appear.

Sourcing Wearable Accessories

Belts, pouches, and jewellery add a lot of lived in feeling to your clothing. Belts and pouches are also very practical - if you're wandering around the campsite, you'll need a way of transporting things around. The first bag I ever bought for LARP was a small haversack from Aussie Disposals. They're under \$20, and, though they are not 'historic', they are easy to dress up or hide on your person. A great way to get things around!

- ❖ Of Science and Swords - ofscienceandswords.com.au
- ❖ Make your own Medieval - makeyourownmedieval.com
- ❖ Medieval Fight Club - medieval-fightclub.com.au

Sourcing Clothing

- ❖ Epic Armoury - epicarmoury.com.au/clothing/?p=1
- ❖ Arm Street - armstreet.com
- ❖ Burgschneider - burgschneider.com/en-au
- ❖ etsy.com/au/shop/Burgschneider

Sourcing LARP-safe weapons

Though we are not a combat LARP, martial characters must carry weapons. Below are a few places you can purchase LARP-safe weapons. Alternatively, you can reach out to our community in our 'help wanted' channel on Discord, as they may have some to share.

- ❖ Calimacil - calimacil.com
- ❖ Epic Armory - epicarmoury.com.au
- ❖ [Of Science and Swords](https://ofscienceandswords.com.au), listed above, also have a great range of LARP-safe weapons.

