Renowned Renaissance noblewoman Christine de Pisan has the modern reputation of being perhaps the first feminist, and her book, The Treasure of the City of Ladies (also known as The Book of Three Virtues), has been described as the Renaissance woman's survival manual. Here she gives advice to the wives of artisans.

- How does Christine de Pisan’s image of husband and wife compare with other medieval views? Would the church question her advice? As a noblewoman commenting on the married life of artisans, does her high social standing influence her advice? Would she give similar advice to women of her own social class?

All wives of artisans should be very painstaking and diligent if they wish to have the necessities of life. They should encourage their husbands or their workmen to get to work early in the morning and work until late. ... [And] the wife herself should [also] be involved in the work to the extent that she knows all about it, so that she may know how to oversee his workers if her husband is absent, and to reprove them if they do not do well. ... And when customers come to her husband and try to drive a hard bargain, she ought to warn him solicitously to take care that he does not make a bad deal. She should advise him to be chary of giving too much credit if he does not know precisely where and to whom it is going, for in this way many come to poverty. ...

In addition, she ought to keep her husband’s love as much as she can, to this end: that he will stay at home more willingly and that he may not have any reason to join the foolish crowds of other young men in taverns and indulge in unnecessary and extravagant expense, as many tradesmen do, especially in Paris. By treating him kindly she should protect him as well as she can from this. It is said that three things drive a man from his home: a quarrelsome wife, a smoking fireplace, and a leaking roof. She too ought to stay at home gladly and not go off every day traipsing hither and yon gossiping with the neighbours and visiting her chums to find out what everyone is doing. That is done by slovenly housewives roaming about the town in groups. Nor should she go off on these pilgrimages got up for no good reason and involving a lot of needless expense.

A Renaissance Banquet

As in Greek and Roman society, the Renaissance banquet was an occasion for good food, interesting conversation, music, and dancing. In Renaissance society, it was also a symbol of status and an opportunity to impress people with the power and wealth of one's family. Banquets were held to celebrate public and religious festivals, official visits, anniversaries, and weddings. The following menu lists the foods served at a grand banquet given by Pope Julius V in the sixteenth century.

A Sixteenth-Century Banquet

First Course
Cold Delicacies from the Sideboard
- Pieces of marzipan and marzipan balls
- Neapolitan spice cakes
- Malaga wine and Pisan biscuits
- Fresh grapes
- Prosciutto cooked in wine, served with capers and grape pulp
- Salted pork tongues cooked in wine, sliced
- Spit-roasted songbirds, cold, with their tongues sliced over them
- Sweet mustard

Second Course
Cold Hot Foods from the Kitchen, Roasts
- Fried veal sweetbreads and liver
- Spit-roasted skylarks with lemon sauce
- Spit-roasted quails with sliced eggplants
- Stuffed spit-roasted pigeons with capers sprinkled over them
- Spit-roasted rabbits, with sauce and crushed pine nuts
- Partridges larded and spit-roasted, served with lemon
- Heavily seasoned poultry with lemon slices
- Slices of veal, spit-roasted, with a sauce made from the juices
- Leg of goat, spit-roasted, with a sauce made from the juices
- Soup of almond paste, with the flesh of three pigeons to each serving

Third Course
Hot Foods from the Kitchen, Boiled Meats and Stews
- Stuffed fat geese, boiled Lombard style and covered with sliced almonds
- Stuffed breast of veal, boiled, garnished with flowers
- Very young calf, boiled, garnished with parsley
- Almonds in garlic sauce
- Turkish-style rice with milk, sprinkled with cinnamon
- Stewed pigeons with mortadella sausage and whole onions
- Cabbage soup with sausages
- Poultry pie, two chickens to each pie
- Fricassee breast of goat dressed with fried onions
- Pies filled with custard cream
- Boiled calves' feet with cheese and egg

Fourth Course
Delicacies from the Sideboard
- Bean tarts
- Quince pastries
- Pear tarts, the pears wrapped in marzipan
- Parmesan cheese and Riviera cheese
- Fresh almonds on vine leaves
- Chestnuts roasted over the coals and served with salt and pepper
- Milk curds
- Ring-shaped cakes
- Wafers made from ground grain