

Anthesteria (11 – 13 of Anthesterion)

This 3-days festival in honor of god Dionysus gives the name to the corresponding month.

On the first day Pithoigia (jar opening) was celebrated. Athenians opened the jars to taste the wine of the new year.

On the second day Choes (pouring) was celebrated. This was the most important of the 3 days, and, for Thucydides, it was equivalent to ancient Dionysia. On this day Athenians celebrated the coming of the spring and they welcomed the god, represented by the Archon-Basileus (King), who entered the city with his sequence in a city transferred on wheels. The procession (pompe) started from Phaleron and concluded to the sanctuary of the god in marshes (en limnais). The god-King met with the basilinni (wife of the King) and they played a ceremony of marriage.

On the third day Chytroi (pots) was celebrated. This festival was devoted to Hermes Chthonios (of the earth). The people boiled food for the dead in the pots and offered it to their deceased.