

Julia Domna



Figurine of Julia Domna as Venus
Roman, possible Eastern Mediterranean
Late 2nd-early 3rd century CE
Bone

This is a statue of Julia Domna, Empress of Rome. She was born in Syria to a wealthy and powerful family and married the emperor of Rome, Septimus Severus. She was a philosopher dedicated to knowledge and culture in addition to being a valued politician, helping her sons rule Rome after Septimus Severus' death. She was influential, powerful, respected, and loved.

In this sculpture, Julia Domna's round face is framed by thick curly hair styled in beautiful waves. She looks straight ahead at the viewer. The light creases around her nose and mouth make it look as though she's about to smile. Although she has a skirt covering her legs, she's not wearing any clothes on her upper body. The Roman goddess of love and beauty, Venus, was often carved half-naked like this. The artist who made this sculpture carved Julia Domna like Venus to show that Julia Domna was a beautiful and well-loved woman.

What country was Julia Domna born in? Look back at the first paragraph if you need to. Can you find this country on a map or atlas? What countries does it touch or share a border with? What is its capital city? What does its flag look like?



Julia Domna loved knowledge and learning. She made a point of becoming friends with scholars, philosophers, and politicians. What do you love learning about? What do your friends like learning about?

In addition to loving learning and being important to politics, Julia Domna loved to be stylish and beautiful. What's a time that you felt beautiful? Draw a picture of it here.

