Zeus (Roman Jupiter): Father and ruler of the gods on Mount Olympus, he is the god of the sky and lightning. Early on, he led the Olympian gods in a rebellion against the older Titans (resulting in the Olympians winning). He married his sister, Hera. Zeus was notoriously unfaithful to Hera and fathered many demigods by seducing a string of humans, nymphs, and other beings, usually by altering his shape. In the images, Zeus holds a thunderbolt (top) and seduces Leda, while in the shape of a swan.

Hera (Roman Juno): Queen of the gods, Hera is the patron goddess of marriage. Her husband, Zeus, was very unfaithful, and she spent much of her time tormenting Zeus' many lovers and his illegitimate children. She is associated with peacocks, and is often described as “cow eyed.”

Poseidon (Roman Neptune): God of the sea, oceans, and earthquakes, Poseidon is a younger brother of Zeus. He generally holds a trident (as seen in the image). He created the horse and several sea-monsters. When angry, he causes storms at sea. His wife is Amphitrite, and his children are shapeshifters and giants that plague sailors and coastlines.
Hades (Roman Pluto): The god of death and the underworld, has a helmet that turns him invisible. Hades is married to a young goddess he abducted, Persephone, daughter of Demeter. He is shown here feasting with Persephone in the underworld.

Demeter (Roman Ceres): The goddess of grain and the harvest, and mother of Persephone. When Persephone spends her 3 months underground with Hades each year, Demeter causes the earth to be barren (the origin of winter). She usually is shown as a large, motherly figure with stalks of wheat.

Hephaestus (Roman Vulcan): The god of fire, craftsmanship, and the forge. He was crippled after Zeus flung him from the heavens to the earth in a rage. Assisted by cyclopean assistants, he forges magical weapons and armor for the gods. He is married to Aphrodite, who cheats on him with gods (e.g. Ares) and handsome human men.

Aphrodite (Roman Venus): The goddess of sexuality and desire, wife of Hephaestus, she has an ongoing affair with Ares. She was born in the sea-foam off Cyprus when Zeus threw the severed testicles of the Titan Kronos into the ocean. She is the mother of Cupid.
Cupid (Roman Eros): God of love and desire, and the son of Aphrodite. He carried a bow of arrows--gold tipped ones that made people fall in love or lead-tipped ones that dulled passion. He usually appears as a winged youth.

Athena (Roman Minerva): Goddess of wisdom, war and skilled crafts like weaving. She sprang full-grown and armored from Zeus' skull after he had a splitting headache. She is described as having grey eyes, and her sacred bird is the owl. She is the patroness of heroes, and famously helped Perseus and Herakles, among others. Like Artemis, she is a virgin goddess.

Dionysus (Roman Bacchus): The god of wine and drunken frenzy. Although generally associated with wine, he is also the god of tragedy. The oldest Greek tragedies were originally performed as religious rituals in his honor, and the plays may have begun with the sacrifice of a goat on stage.

Hermes (Roman Mercury): The god of travelers, messengers, thieves, tricksters, and gamblers. He wears sandals with wings that let him fly with arrow-like speed wherever he willed, and he guides dead spirits to Hades (carrying a staff called a caduceus).
Ares (Roman Mars): The god of war, but more of a bully and less intellectual than Athena. In Roman mythology, his equivalent Mars is something much more fierce, and along with Venus, Mars serves as one of the two great patrons of Rome.

Apollo (Roman Apollo): The sun god, also associated with the arts and with prophecy. His sanctuary at Delphi was home to a great oracle who was famous for her prophecies. He generally wears a laurel wreath (symbol of artistic skill) and is often seen with the Muses, the minor goddesses of the arts. His twin sister is Artemis, their mother is Leto.

Artemis (Roman Diana): Virgin goddess of the moon and the hunt, she is Zeus's favorite daughter. She made Zeus swear never to make her marry and let her spend her nights in the forest hunting. She famously had the hunter Actaeon killed after she spied her bathing (turned him into a stag and his hunting dogs tore him apart).
Image credits: All images of Greek vases retrieved on November 8, 2015 from theoi.com.

1. Zeus with a Thunderbolt, detail of a vase in the Antikensammlung, Munich. c. 480 BCE. http://www.theoi.com/Gallery/K1.2.html


3. Hera, detail of a vase in the Antikensammlung, Munich. c. 470-460 BCE. http://www.theoi.com/Gallery/K4.2.html


7. Hephaestus riding a donkey, detail of a vase in the Toledo Museum of Art. c. 430-420 BCE.  
http://www.theoi.com/Gallery/K7.1.html

8. Aphrodite with a dove, detail of a vase in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, c. 365-355 BCE.  
http://www.theoi.com/Gallery/K10.5.html

9. Eros, detail of a vase in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, c. 350 BCE.  
http://www.theoi.com/Gallery/K32.10.html

10. Athena with a tablet and stylus, detail of a vase in the Antikensammlung, Munich. c. 480 BCE.  
http://www.theoi.com/Gallery/K8.4.html

11. Dionysus riding a panther, detail of a vase in the Louvre, Paris, c. 370 BCE.  
http://www.theoi.com/Gallery/K12.2.html

http://www.theoi.com/Gallery/K11.11.html

14. Apollo, detail of a vase in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, c. 440
   http://www.theoi.com/Gallery/K20.5.html