

Volume 9 Issue 3 Beltane 2012

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Beltane

Beltain, also spelled Beltine, Iris Beltaine or Beltaine or Cetamain is one of the 8 sacred Sabbats of the Pagans. This festival is held on the first day of May in Ireland and Scotland. Beltane was first mentioned in a glossary to Cormac, bishop of Cashel and King of Munstern, who was killed in 908. Cormac describes how cattle were driven between two bonfires on Beltaine as a magical means of protecting them from disease before they were led into summer pastures. This custom is still observed in Ireland.

Beltane was originally a celebration of the ending of Winter and beginning of Spring. Beltain celebrations and rituals are still celebrated by Pagans and Wiccans to this very day. Beltane is also celebrated in Christianity as Maypole day with dancing around the pole. Beltain is a fire ritual and celebrants engage in dancing and singing all night long around a bonfire. In the morning, flowers were gathered to make wreaths for the hair.

Beltane is the last of the 3 celebration Sabbaths celebrated by the Ancients and it heralded the beginning of summer. Food supplies were low, people were depressed from the drab cold days of winter and this made Beltane celebrations very special. Facts and myths blend together during these celebrations.

May was not an ideal time for the ancients for marriage, thus the year and a day was begun for hand fasting couples. This was considered a trial time for couples, living together before making the marriage legal. So it seems to me the Ancients knew living together and knowing one another before actually marrying made more sense than the marriage and divorce so prevalent today.

Water was another important aspect of the Beltane celebration. Myths surround the usage of water at this time also. It is said that if you bathe in the dew gathered before dawn on Beltane, your beauty will flourish all year. Those sprinkled with May dew are ensured of health and happiness. Other customs such as drinking from a well before sunrise will insure good health and fortune.

The main color of Beltane is green representing growth, abundance, plentiful harvest, fertility and luck. The use of other colors in Beltane celebrations as well as the whole month of May are used, whites, yellows, pinks, reds, violets and purples representing cleansings, purity, good fortune, fertility, happiness and wealth. So no matter how you choose to celebrate Beltane, rather it be a ritual, dancing around the fire or Maypole, singing and eating nature's produce, it's a time for happiness and joy to be alive and one with the Goddess. Blessed Be.....

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beltane>

© HP Lady Zephyr

Lady Zephyr is a High Priestess, Ordained Minister and co-founder of the [Sisters Beneath the Whispering Willows school](#). She lives in Tupelo, Mississippi. She rides her own motorcycle and belongs to the Southern Cruisers Riding Club. All proceeds from their rallies and benefits go to St. Jude's Hospital. She is also a member of the Tupelo Area Pagan's Group.

Beltane and Litha

Beltane symbolizes the "Bright Fire" that burns within us all. It is a fertility festival in which we honour our sexual nature and revel in the glory that is our body.

At this time of year we honour the Goddess as Virgin, waking up to Her sexuality. Rituals celebrating Menarche, a young woman's first blood, are ideal. For many of us, menarche was a time of embarrassment, shame and guilt. Creating a ritual that allows you to meet that younger self can be healing. Your wisdom can guide her through this passage into womanhood; together you can celebrate this singular moment.

At Beltane, we honour Goddess as Virgin in the true sense of the word, "She Who is Whole Unto Herself". When we feel whole, we are no longer reliant on other people's opinions of us. We stand, secure and confident in the knowledge that we are beautiful, created in Her image. Create rituals honouring you as a woman, perform self-blessings, be naked in front of a mirror, without judgment, and love the Temple where Goddess lives. Know and trust that you are whole unto yourself, a Goddess in your own right. Explore your body, your lover, your life, in a sensuous and sexual way. The Virgin is fearless, let Her guide you to glorious heights. For "The Charge" states ... "all acts of love and pleasure are Her rituals".

Litha, the Summer Solstice, is longest day of the year. We honour the transformation of the Maiden into Mother, fertile and ripe with life. The Earth is alive, teeming with life, growth and potential. Celebrate the season with action, manifest into reality, the seeds of ideas dreamt through the dark months. Create rituals that fire your passion, enhance creativity. All that we do honours Goddess.

Adapted from [Women's Rites, Women's Mysteries](#) by Ruth Barrett

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Beltane Ritual

Items needed:

Chime candles: yellow, red, blue, green, white, silver

Intent candles: white, green and red

Altar cloth: Green with white

Wand (use a small plain branch with the bark peeled)

Bowl of earth

Small amount of your chosen oil for blessing the wand

Cloth for wiping wand and hands

Gemstones: carnelian rose quartz, emerald, bloodstone, lapis, malachite, yellow agate

Incense-Patchouli for fertility

Musk oil for anointing candles (for fertility)

Sage

Dress and anoint candles

Purify the space with sage and light the incense

Ground and center

Cast the circle as you normally do

Call in Spirit

Call in Goddess

Give Thanks by saying:

I give thanks for all that the Goddess Provides,

I give thanks for the presence of the Goddess in my life

State your intent:

The intent of this ritual is to celebrate Beltane and

the union of the God and the Goddess!

Body of Ritual

Dance to raise power for magical activities and then send the power into the bowl of earth on the altar, saying:

Beltane!
I dance with glee
on Beltane's eve.
All senses freeing,
I dance for being.
The flower and the flame
of love's own rite
shall blossom. Sun
embrace Earth, bright.

Light the white intent candle to the Sun. This is the Beltane fire, our modern substitute for the hilltop bonfires of our ancestors. The Bel fire is an invocation to the Sun God to bring blessing and protection for the coming year. This is sacred fire with healing and purifying properties. As you light the candle, be aware of its power and significance and say:

I light this candle to the Sun.

Now take up a dish of earth. Bless it in the name of the Goddess. Lay your hands upon it and say:

I bless, consecrate, and set apart this earth,
in the name of the Triple Goddess. May this
be sacred earth, set apart for magic. For
earth is of the Goddess, being her sacred body.

Light the green intent candle.

Remember that the Goddess is not only of the Moon, but also of the Earth and of the farthest stars. She is the Triple Goddess of the Circle of Rebirth, the Mother of All Life.

Now, take the wooden wand and oil it with your chosen oil, saying:

*I bless this wand in the name of the Lord of the Day,
The youthful, ardent one,
The Lord of Life,
The God of the greenwood.*

Pass it swiftly through the candle flame, the Bel fire, so that it becomes magically imbued, 'charged', with power.

Place the wand upon the dish of earth, saying as you hold it there:

*As wand is to the earth,
so the male is to the female
and the Sun to our blossoming world,
Joined, they bring happiness.*

*May the God of Life give _____
{something you want, for example, peace on Earth}*

May the Goddess bring it forth!

Meditate for a while, and picture the blossoming of what you have asked for.

Leave the earth and wand upon the altar.

Walk deosil three times around the circle. Go evenly, with grace, meditatively.

Light the red intent candle.

Stand in front of the candle flames, allowing yourself to feel peaceful. Gaze into the flames.

Visualize a red rosebud in your womb, this is the source of your creative power, whether you are pregnant with a child, an idea, a work of art or an intention. Close your eyes and picture the light from the candle streaming into your womb so that the rosebud blooms, unfolds. Hold the image for a while, feeling the silkiness, smelling the scent, the freshness, seeing the color of the fully open rose within you. Feel the strength and power of your own fully blossomed capabilities. When you are ready, say the following:

*I am woman,
Strong to conceive and to create,
to give birth and to tend.
As I am daughter of the Goddess
and blessed by the God, may I _____
{name what you wish to bring forth in life}*

Feel the strength and creative force within your womb, the center of your being. See the power being channeled, flowing into the desire you have just voiced.

Say the following:

With harm to none, this ritual is done!

Thank and release the Goddess

Thank and release Spirit and the Quarters

Take up the circle

Ground

Allow intent candles to burn out safely

Store magickal earth in an appropriate container

Burn the wand to symbolize the bonfires of Beltane

©Peace Whitehorse, April 2011

Peace Whitehorse is a Priestess of the [Order of the White Moon](#) and a student in [The Sacred Three Goddess School](#). She lives in Pennsylvania with her husband and three Shetland sheepdogs.

Chartres Cathedral

Chartres was the home of the Carnutes, a tribe of Warrior-Druids. Located in the center of Gaul, amidst forests of oaks, it is likely Chartres was the site of the annual gatherings of the Gallic peoples. At Samhain, the tribes would come together, to honour the dead, arrange marriages, trade, and dole out justice. Most important of all, they honoured the Goddess, at an ancient mound and wellspring. It was at this sacred place that the Druids worshiped the "Virgo Paritura", the "Virgin about to give Birth".

When Christianity arrived, Catholic priests proclaimed the site foreshadowed the birth of Jesus by the Virgin Mary and the Church of Notre Dame de Chartres was erected. Chartres continued to be a place of pilgrimage, people came to receive the blessing of the Goddess and to partake of the healing waters (until it was denounced as pagan and sealed off). The cathedral functioned as a marketplace, a gathering place for workers, a place of learning and a hospital. Chartres became home to several purported holy relics, a piece of the Cross, and, most notably, the robes and girdle worn by the Virgin when the angel Gabriel informed her she was pregnant with the son of God. The holy relics even went on tour during reconstructions of the Cathedral, performing miracles and attracting a large following. These tours led to even greater numbers of Pilgrims to Chartres to view the miraculous artifacts, to pay homage to the Black Madonnas, and to walk the Labyrinth.

Although Labyrinths were laid in churches to mimic the road to the Holy Land, used as a meditation tool, or to do penance, they have ancient pagan roots. Labyrinths represent the Goddess. Those who walk the Labyrinth are entering the womb of the Mother, to be reborn at the center and emerge renewed into the world.

The Labyrinth is but one of many symbols of Goddess depicted at Chartres. Her images and symbols are also found in the stained glass windows. Notre Dame De la Belle Verriere became an object of devotion, invoked by mothers for a safe

childbirth. Other windows depict vulvas, bees, roses, all symbols of Goddess. One window even depicts the worship of Diana! Chartres honours her pagan roots in other ways as well. Oak leaves carved into pillars, a zodiac that rivals those of Egypt in its accuracy and an image of Theseus and Ariadne (defaced, possibly by offended priests?) at the center of the Labyrinth.

One of Chartres most intriguing features are the mismatched spires, representing a balance of masculine and feminine energies. One tower is capped with an image of the Sun, and is exactly 365 feet in height, corresponding to the solar year. Its feminine counterpart has a symbol of the Moon at the top. The difference in height between the two towers is 28 feet, the length of a lunar month.

The most revered of all artifacts were the Black Madonnas. Notre Dame De Sous-Terre resided in the crypt by the sacred well. Sadly, She was destroyed during the French Revolution. Her replacement, a copy of the original, is not considered to be a Black Madonna. Notre Dame du Pilier rests high atop a pillar in the nave. It is believed that the wouivre, the ancient female earth power, rises up through Her from the well. Dressed in robes of fine cloth, it is She for whom pilgrims make the journey to Chartres.

Chartres Cathedral is a loving tribute to the Divine Feminine. As one passes through the doors, there is a sense that one has entered the womb of the Goddess. The art and architecture reflect Her in all Her splendid glory.

Chartres remains a destination for pious Catholic pilgrims but it has also become a place where modern Pagans and Goddess worshippers gather. Those who seek Goddess and recognize Her in the Marian imagery come to honour Her, within the womb that is Chartres Cathedral.

<http://www.philipcoppens.com/chartres.html>

<http://www.soulsofdistortion.nl/The%20mystery%20of%20the%20Cathedrals.html>

<http://www.crystalinks.com/labyrinths.html>

http://www.cassandraeason.com/vierge_noir/index.htm

http://en.chartressecrets.org/cathedral/background_history.htm

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White Moon Happenings

This past quarter has been very full!

The Ordination Council of the Board of Directors is very pleased to note the continuing hard work of Priestess Literata and Priestess Peace Whitehorse, in Level IV, our training Level for elevation to High Priestess and legal ordination. Both Literata and Peace have been proceeding through the lesson work and internships of Level IV, and recently designed special short courses for our OWM Sisters to enjoy. Literata is offering a course on Herbalism, and Peace is offering a course on

Practical Magick. In addition, we have another Priestess waiting for our current Board Meeting to conclude, so that she can begin her Level IV work!

HP Mystic Amazon and HP Ka Wahine Ahi, of our branch school [Sisters of the Rising Moon](#), are delighted to announce that their student, Ocean Phoenix completed Level I of our White Moon studies, to become an Initiate of the Order! Please enjoy her wonderful project on Danu at:

<http://www.orderwhitemoon.org/goddess/DanubyOceanP/DanubyOceanPhoenix.html> .

HP Kerritwyn Ceannaire, of the Sacred Three Goddess School, is also joyous to announce the recent accomplishments of her students! First, she is delighted to announce that Niamh Red Horse completed Level I to become an Initiate of the Order of White Moon! Please enjoy her luminous Level I Final Project, Encountering the Goddess Pomona, at:

http://www.orderwhitemoon.org/goddess/encountering_pomona.html .

In addition, Kerritwyn is thrilled to announce that beloved student Aethyia Danann completed Level III of our White Moon studies to become a Priestess of the Order! Please enjoy her Level III Final Project, a gorgeous tribute to Maha Devi, at <http://orderwhitemoon.org/goddess/MahaDevi/mahadevi.html> .

We are also delighted to welcome new students enrolled this quarter at [Beneath Whispering Willows](#), [Sacred Three](#) and [Rising Moon](#). If you would like to learn more about White Moon Studies, and our branch schools, please take a look at <http://orderwhitemoon.org/schools/index.html> !

HP Kerritwyn Ceannaire is the elected President of the Board of Directors and the Head of the Order. She teaches White Moon lessons to women in [The Sacred Three Goddess School](#), and to male-to-female transgendered seekers in the [Rainbow Moon School](#).

Lemon/Poppy seed Cake

Preheat oven to 350 degrees

Ingredients

1 3/4 cups self-rising flour

3/4 milk

2/3 cup sugar

1/4 cup canola oil

2 tbs. poppy seeds

1 tbs. grated lemon peel

2 tbs. lemon juice

Powdered sugar

Mix flour, sugar and poppy seeds together then blend in the rest of the ingredients except for the powdered sugar.

Pour in an ungreased or Pam sprayed 9x9x2 pan

Bake for 35-40 minutes or until toothpick comes out clean

Cool on rack

Then sprinkle powdered sugar on top.

Summer Punch

Here is a delicious punch that you can alter or add to as the mood strikes.

Garnish your cups with paper umbrellas or funny straws.

Ingredients

1 quart water

1 cup Superfine sugar (substitute honey or other sweetener)

1 quart cranberry juice

2 cups orange juice

Juice of one lemon

Melon balls and thinly sliced orange, lemon and lime rounds

1 Quart sparkling water or ginger ale

2 cups sherbet or cracked ice

Instructions

Heat the water and sugar until the sugar dissolves. Chill.

Pour the sugar syrup, juices and fruit into a large bowl.

Just before serving, add the sparkling water or ginger ale and the sherbet or ice.

Pour into cups and garnish with paper umbrellas stuck into pieces of fruit or with decorated straws.

Makes about 3 1/2 quarts.

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