



The Simmering Cauldron Newsletter

Yule
2017

A mystical and magical resource based in Mid Wales

Shop address – 7 Shortbridge Street, Newtown, Powys, SY16 2LW

Yuletide – what? when? wow?

Nowadays Yuletide is a loosely defined time of year centred round The Winter Solstice / Christmas commencing any time after the full moon before the solstice and ending on Twelfth Night or beyond. Before the 19th century people celebrated the 12 days of Christmas but in more recent times the secular tradition has become 'all for one or two days'. Neo Pagans however prefer to celebrate 'the season' with many activities focusing on the Solstice and celebrating the 'return of the light'.



Here are some activities that might be incorporated in celebrating yuletide. How many do you do already?

- Plan a range of activities for the whole season recognising that Christmas Eve and Christmas, New Year's Eve and New Year's Day have their origins in Winter Solstice celebrations of a variety of Pagan cultures through the ages.
- Decorate your home with sacred plants connected with Winter Solstice: evergreen wreaths & boughs, mistletoe, holly, and ivy. Learn about the Pagan symbolism of each.
- Set up a Yule tree in your home and decorate it with lights, sun symbols, and other images. Reflect on blessings of joy, renewal, and well-wishes as you decorate the tree.
- Use lights to represent the Sun. Decorate with electric lights and candles. On the night of the Solstice, turn off all lights, experience the longest night, reflect on renewal and peace, and turn the lights back on to symbolize the birth of the New Solar Year.
- Recognize Santa as a multi-cultural, multi-religious character - learn about the Pagan roots of Santa and other Winter Solstice sacred gift bringers, including the Goddess.
- Learn about celebratory foods, symbols, customs, and incorporate something you have learned into your celebration of Yuletide.
- Listen to Pagan Yuletide music. Create a Yuletide chant, poem, or song.
- Burn a Yule Log in a hearth, in a bonfire, or by burning candles on, in, or near a log of Oak on an altar. Learn about Yule Log traditions and create your own.
- Meditate on the rising and/or setting of the Solstice Sun. Note its position on the horizon at this time of year and observe its change in position on the horizon as the days start lengthening again.
- Join with others in celebrating Pagan Yuletide. Attend a ritual, be part of a festival, join an on-line discussion, host a party.
- Contribute to a charity of your choice. Spread the joy of Yuletide.
- Learn about sacred sites aligned with the Winter Solstice. Envision your own celebrations of Winter Solstice being part of a vast network of Solstice celebrations happening around the planet.
- Focus on world peace and planetary well-being in your rituals, meditations, prayers, and other workings.

Blessed be.

Tony

Yule Incense

There's nothing better than creating your own incense for the Pagan Sabbats. There are lots of recipes around, using herbs, gums and woods associated with the Winter Solstice. These include pine, cedar, frankincense (oil or resin), juniper berries, orange (dried peel or oil), cinnamon or allspice. When creating incense, there are a few simple basic rules to follow in order to get the best results. Firstly, a good deep and sturdy pestle and mortar is a useful tool. Begin with a good quantity of your chosen resin such as frankincense (a must for Yule!). This should be crushed lightly in the pestle and mortar before adding the dried herbs or woods. Once these are added, work again to reduce the size of the pieces. This is a useful time to contemplate the purpose of the incense and add any intent. In the case of the Solstice, we may be talking about the return of the light, a healthy year ahead or whatever. Use this time of gentle rhythmic action of grinding the incense to add these wishes. Some people prefer to reduce the ingredients to a powder; I prefer a few lumps in mine! Finally add a few drops of essential oil. This helps to moisten the dry ingredients, thus lengthening and slowing the burning time. Any oil, particularly those governed by the sun may be used.



What follows is my recipe, developed over time and after lots of research in this and a previous life!

- Three good teaspoons of frankincense resin
- Piece cinnamon stick
- A few pieces of dried orange peel
- Two or three clove buds
- Partially dried pine needles

A few drops each of cinnamon and orange oil
 Once these have been crushed and the oil added, best results are gained by leaving the incense in a sealed jar for a couple of days. Burn on charcoal at your ceremony or ritual. Incense will keep indefinitely and can be refreshed by adding a few more drops of oil. Make sure to record your recipes as it is hard to reproduce a good blend that you have created from memory.

Angela

Yule and New Year opening

Monday 18th December Extra opening (10 – 5)
 Sunday 24th December Extra opening (10 – 2)

**We close on Monday 25th December
 and reopen on Tuesday 2nd January**

The Simmering Cauldron Calendar

for 2018 is now available to freely download from the Publications page of our website.



★★★



Cauldron Card offer

for 'the Season'
£1 off

every £10 spent

Don't forget to flash your CC when you shop!

(Offer subject to conditions)

Our Diary

Newtown shop opening hours	
Tuesday – Friday 10.00 – 5.00 Saturday 10.00 – 4.00	
Saturday 10 th March	Devon, Cornwall & C.I. Pagan Conference, Nr. Bude
Saturday 17 th March	Wolverhampton Pagan Market