



## SUMMER SOLSTICE, LITHA: SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE

### **The Season**

Summer is such a buzz, of activity, of energy, so many places to go, people to visit, things to do, to prepare for... such a reflection of the summer life seasons of mother and father, and the energy of full moon, and ovulation and midday – these all being the correspondences (matching energies) of the peak points of their cycle.

Using the wheel of the year, Summer starts at Beltane, October 31st, November 1, and goes until Lammas on February 2nd.

So at the start of Summer we can tap into the ‘building to climax’ energy of the Earth, of which we are all a part, and flow with it, be with it and apply it. And then after the Summer Solstice we can connect with the different energy that follows the peak and begins the descent.

The ‘building to climax’ energy that is the Spring side of the Summer Solstice is the energy of the sun waxing to full. ‘Full sun’ occurs on the Summer Solstice, the longest day of the year. The year being the thirteen moon experience, the cycle of the seasons, that is the dance between our Sun and the Earth.

The other and very familiar time that we feel this building to full energy is in our bodies as we approach ovulation. It’s the time within the cycle, whichever cycle, of peak activity, creativity and energy, and although sometimes, for example in the life season of Mother, it feels like it is never ending, it will.

We get to experience many turns around the cycles through our menstrual cycle, the lunar cycle and the cycle of a day and night, and methinks those ongoing repetitions serve us well in enabling a big picture perspective to take to our life cycle.

After the Summer Solstice the days get shorter, but we hardly notice it because of our predilection for being outside later in the day, to play and party in the warm summer evenings.

However, only six weeks on from the Summer Solstice is the first (of three) harvest festivals, Lammas. When Lammas comes, Summer is over and Autumn begins.

The cycle of the seasons teaches us so much, especially and perhaps most importantly, to be present to what is, for soon enough it will pass, as we continue on the cycle.

*This is the wisdom of the cycles.*

### **Summer Spiritual Practice**

Make an altar for the season.

Don’t let the busyness of summer get in the way of honouring the season. You can easily make an altar to Summer, and this is especially fun with children. Creating an altar is an ancient, cross cultural, human practice. It serves to bring our focus to a particular thing, time or event. By creating seasonal altars we can deepen our awareness of what the energy of the season holds and how that is reflected in our inner and outer worlds. Nature is a great teacher!!

Choose a place that you will see often on your movements through your home or somewhere that particularly lends itself to being an altar. You'll know the perfect place, maybe its outside. Decorate it with special things you have and things from nature that make you think of and feel all the different aspects of Summer. Perhaps light a candle on the altar each evening or morning, making particular wishes or setting intentions that are in keeping with the energy of summer – full potential, 'full bloom-ness'. For example "I give thanks for 'such and such' being its full potential, expression, manifestation."

And then after the peak of Summer, the summer solstice, the energy shifts into letting go. You know that late Summer feeling, like the party is coming to a close. So appropriate prayers at your altar could include prayers of gratitude and letting go.

*"Litha also is the feast of the fairy, and at this time, doors between the worlds open, and we can peek through and dwell for just a little time in the Otherworld of the fairies – a place where youth is everlasting, and enchantment plenty, beauty, love and joy are ours for all time. For just a moment, Litha gives us a glimpse of life in all its perfection. It encourages us to seize the day, and to dwell completely in the magic of the present moment."*

Lucy Cavendish "White Magic"

### **Suggested Ceremony for the Summer Solstice**

For the Summer Solstice our community gathers for a faery party. We create an altar together with flowers from our gardens going around the circle with each person expressing gratitude for whatever they are thankful for and then giving thanks for whatever they want to see come to 'full bloom-ness' or 'fruiting' in their lives.

You could gather with friends to do this or do it with your family or by yourself. The idea is simply to align with the energy of the season, the energy that is - full bloom, fruiting, maximum potential, beauty, ripeness, full light and use this energy to fuel your life, your prayer, your intentions. Give thanks for what you want to come to fullness in your life, and light a candle in honour of that, or make something to represent that.

Blessed Be!