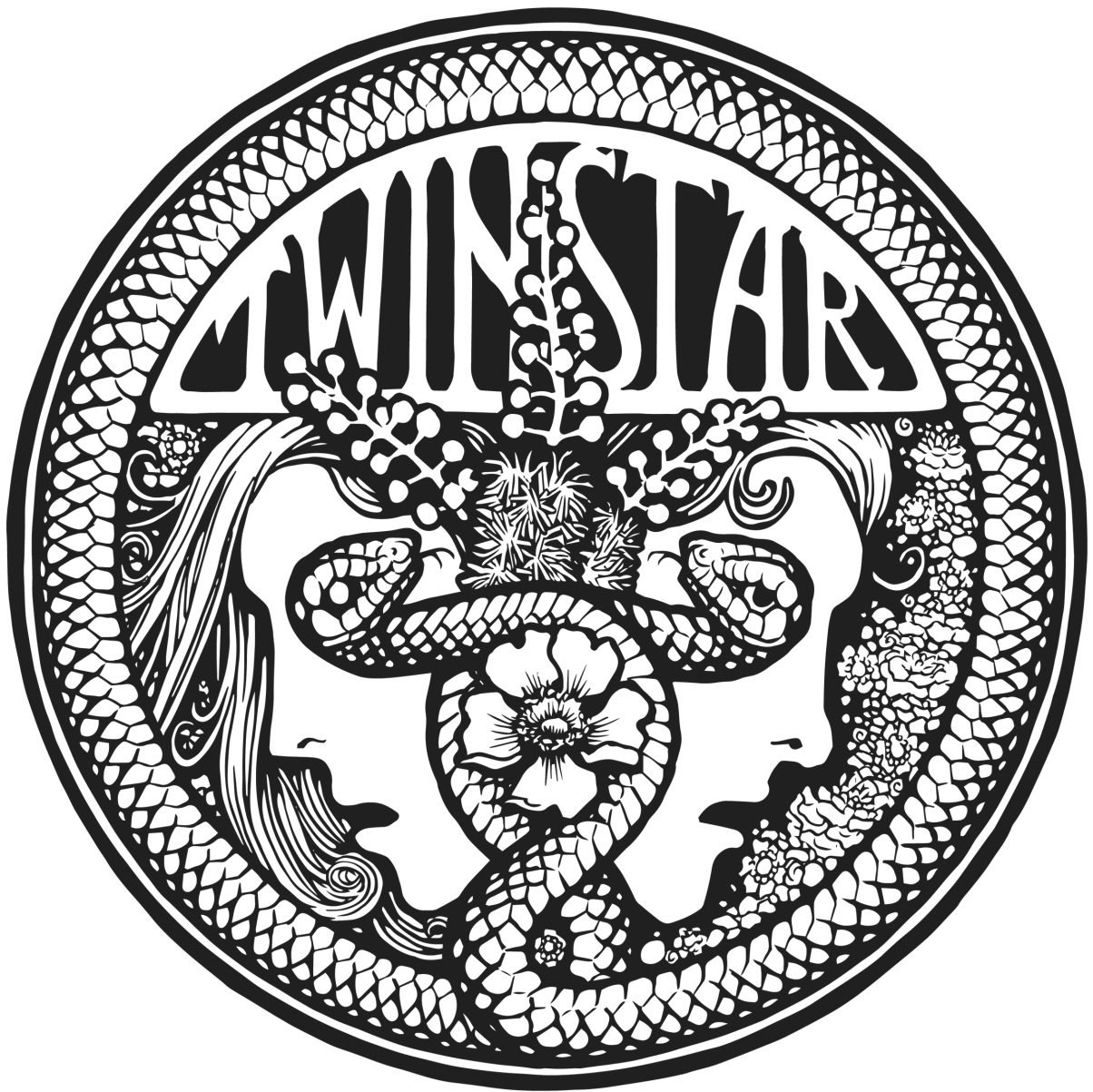


TWIN STAR PRESENTS

JOURNEY THROUGH THE WHEEL OF THE YEAR

WITH LUPO PASSERO



Summer Solstice

THE SEVEN DIRECTION PRAYER

Facing East

We call to and welcome the energy of the East, of the morning Sun, of Dawn and of the New Day, the energy of spring, and of new beginnings, the birth of babies and children, we call to the rising sun and the light that illuminates All. We invite Eagle, Hawk, Mourning Dove and the winged ones who fly closest to the heavens, and we welcome their insight and vision. We invite the energy of the snowdrops, dandelions and skunk cabbage. We welcome our well ancestors and loved ones who dwell in this direction and ask that you join us and bless our circle with the positive energies and spirits of the East. Blessed Be!

Facing South

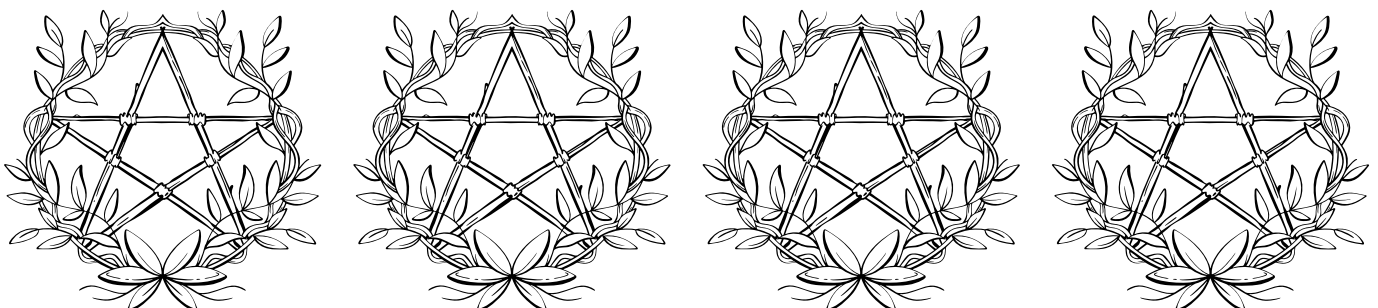
We call to and welcome the fiery energy of the South. We invite in the heat of the noonday sun, the joy of adolescence and the place where the sun shines at its highest point in the sky. We call to the direction of love, creativity and energy and welcome the spirit of action and growth. We invite Coyote, Fox, Deer and all four-legged creatures. We invite the energy of hibiscus, holy basil and bee balm. We welcome all of our well ancestors and loved ones who dwell in this direction and ask that you join us and bless our circle with the positive energies and spirits of the South.

Facing West

We call to and welcome the energy of the West, to the healing waters, the maturity of adulthood, to the place where the veil is thinnest and to the evening and twilight energies. We call to the medicine direction and the birthplace of emotion and to the gifts of healing. We invite Owl, Otter, Salmon and all of the creatures of the sea, lakes and streams, and we welcome their medicine of flexibility, grace and flow. We invite the energy of black cohosh, angelica and blue lotus. We welcome all of our well ancestors and loved ones who dwell in this direction and ask that you join us and bless our circle with the positive energies and spirits of the West. Blessed Be!

Facing North

We call to and welcome the energy of the North, the earth that sustains us, the home of night, of the dark hour and the spirit of winter and the energy of rest and renewal. We welcome the wisdom of the Elders and ask for the blessing of the Grandmothers and Grandfathers. We invite Bear, Buffalo and Mouse and we welcome their gifts of generosity, the spirit of giveaway and the gift of story. We invite the energy of mariposa lily, witch hazel and pine. We welcome all of our well ancestors and loved ones who dwell in this direction and ask that you join us and bless our circle with the positive energies and spirits of the North. Blessed Be!



THE SEVEN DIRECTION PRAYER

Above (looking up)

We call to and welcome the energy and to the spirits of all that is Above. Father Sky, Star people, Cloud people, Planetary beings and the entire cosmos. We welcome the divine masculine energy of the grandfathers, fathers, brothers, uncles and sons. We welcome the energies and spirits of Father Sky and Grandmother Moon. We call to the Angels, elementals, devas, plant spirits, Ether and Spider Woman who weaves us all into connection with one another. We welcome all of well our ancestors and loved ones who dwell in this direction and ask that you join us and bless our circle with the positive energies and spirits of the Above.

Blessed Be!

Below (touching the Earth)

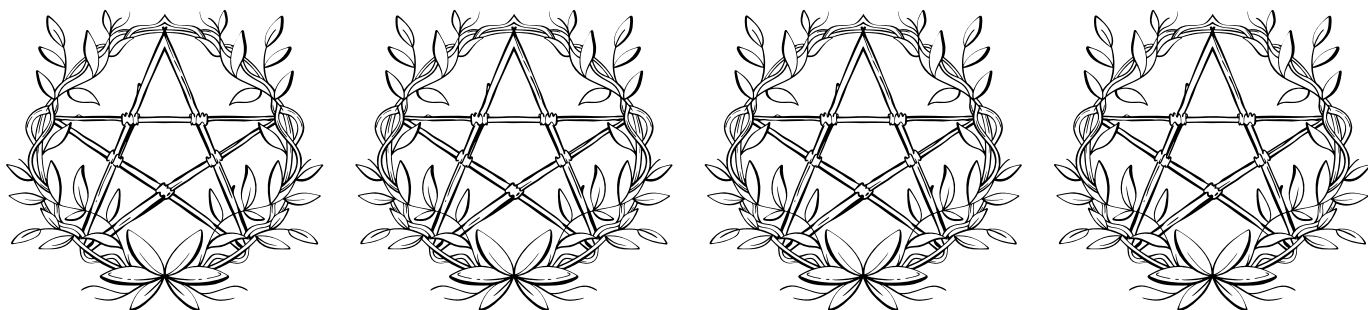
We call to and welcome the energy of Mother Earth, the plant people, the stone and crystal people, the mycelium that holds us together and to the well spirits of all that is Below. We welcome the divine feminine energy and the spirit of our grandmothers, our mothers, sisters, aunts and daughters. We welcome the energies and creative spirits of Mother Earth as well as our guides and well ancestors. We honor and respect the reflection of all that is and give thanks to our shadow. We welcome all of our well ancestors and loved ones who dwell in this direction and ask that you join us and bless our circle with the positive energies and spirits of Below.

Blessed Be!

Within (hands at heart center)

We call to and welcome the energy of all our relations and to the place within. The one heart. One love. The union of all. We give thanks for each living being on this planet and for the ancient heartbeat that connects us. We welcome the positive, fluid, non-binary energy and the energy of the two-spirits. We invite in the universal soul energy and the spirit of the One Heart. We welcome the gifts of love, unity and compassion for all. We welcome all of our well ancestors and loved ones who dwell in this direction and ask that you join us and bless our circle with the positive energies and spirits of within.

Blessed Be!



About Lupo

I feel blessed to have grown up in woodlands of Western Connecticut, always close to Nature. My paternal Grandmother was a wise woman, a Strega from Italy. And my Maternal Great Grandmother was from Knockneshee, the druid "Hill of the Fairies" in Ireland. Since childhood I have been creating circles, hosting ceremonies and holding space for others. At 18 I was pulled to the heart of the Appalachian Mountains where I began my botanical studies with a variety of folks, namely the plants, but also many great human teachers as well. At an early age I participated in Moon Circles and was initiated into the Goddess tradition which helped me to connect the dots to both my Sud Italia and my Celtic heritage. This is where I was first introduced to the idea of the four directions and sacred elements and began deeply connecting with the natural world.

Over the past two and half decades of continuing upon this healing path I have become a Mother, an Herbalist, a Flower Essence Practitioner, a Plant Spirit Practitioner, a Medicine Woman, a Teacher and an Apothecary Owner, but ultimately became simply, a Green Witch. It has been many moons now that I have been sharing the path of the Green Witch through a variety of classes and ritual offerings. This past year I made the decision to put some of my offerings onto an online format so that we could meet the rising demand and also reach folks who may not find such witchy offerings readily available in their communities. I have taken decades of my experience and created a training meant to help folks remember the ancient ways, find deep communion with the elements and celebrate the never-ending Journey of the Green Witch. Thank you for accepting the invitation from me to walk this path with you.



THE HOLY DAYS

•**Samhain** – All Hollow’s Eve - October 31st. Samhain is one of our four Greater Sabbats, the highest holy day of witches. It is a cross quarter day, situated between Autumn Equinox and Winter Solstice.

•**Yule** - Winter Solstice 21st Dec. The winter solstice, the rebirth of the Sun, is an important turning point, as it marks the shortest day, when the hours of daylight are at their least.

•**Imbloc** - Candlemas - February 2nd. This holiday is also known as Candlemas, or Brigid's Day. One of the 4 Celtic Fire Festivals. Commemorates the changing of the Goddess from the Crone to the Maiden.

•**Ostara** - Spring Equinox - March 21st/22nd. It is traditionally the day of equilibrium, neither harsh winter or the merciless summer, and is a time of childish wonder.

•**Beltane** - Celtic May Day - 30th April - 1st May. It officially begins at moonrise on May Day Eve and marks the beginning of the third quarter of the ancient Celtic year.

•**Summer Solstice** - Midsummer - 21st June. A powerful day of the year for the Light, this Sabbat glorifies the Sun God and the Sun, and fire plays a very prominent role.

•**Lammas** - August 2, July 31st/Aug 1st. This is an Irish Gaelic name for the feast which commemorates the funeral games of Lugh, Celtic god of light, and son of the Sun. Lammas is traditionally the celebration of the first harvest.

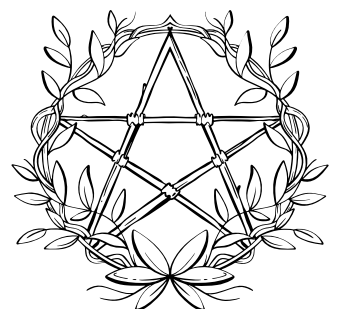
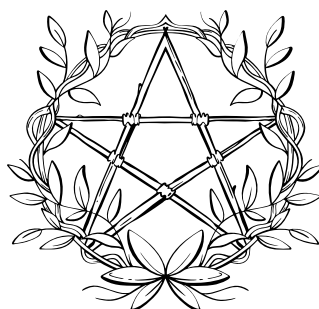
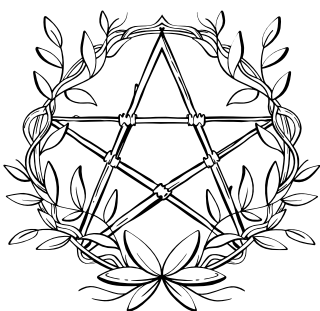
•**Mabon** September 21-23. Technically, an equinox is an astronomical point and, due to the fact that the earth wobbles on its axis slightly, the date may vary by a few days depending on the year.

The summer solstice, also known as midsummer Litha, or St. John's Day, occurs when one of the Earth's poles has its maximum tilt toward the Sun. It happens twice yearly, once in each hemisphere. For that hemisphere, the summer solstice is when the Sun reaches its highest position in the sky and is the day with the longest period of daylight.

It has been a grand tribal gathering time since ancient times. From here on out, the Sun will set a little earlier each night until Yule and so we recognize and give thanks for its warmth.

Though it's typically celebrated on June 21st, the exact moment of the Summer Solstice varies from year to year. This is due to a slight misalignment between the Gregorian calendar and the actual rate of the Earth's rotation around the Sun.

The Solstice also occurs at differing local times, so depending on where you live, it may fall the day before or after the date listed on any given calendar. For this reason, a date range of June 20-22 is often cited in sources on the Wheel of the Year.



So here we are at Midsummer! We have arrived at the longest day and the shortest night of the year. Nearly every agricultural society has marked the high point of summer in some way, shape or form. The Goddess is now full and pregnant with Child, and the Sun God is at the height of His virility. This is the peak of the Solar year, and the Sun is at the height of its life-giving power. The Earth is awash with fertility and fulfillment, and this is a time of joy and celebration, of expansiveness and the celebration of achievements. As the Sun reaches its highest point in the sky, the God/Divine Masculine is now in his full power, and the Goddess/Divine Feminine of the Earth is bringing forth the greatest abundance of the year. The crops are reaching their full maturity and the forests are bursting with lush growth. In just a few short weeks, the harvest season will begin, but for now we pause to celebrate the manifestation of what was planted in the early weeks of Spring.

The warm sunlight is a welcome contrast to the cold and dark of Winter, and we bask in its comforts. There is a focus on the Element of Fire in honor of the Sun God, but recognition is also given to the Horned God of the forest and its wild animal life as well as the Oak King.

In some traditions, Litha is a time at which there is a battle between light and dark. The Oak King is seen as the ruler of the year between winter solstice and summer solstice, and the Holly King from summer to winter. At each solstice they battle for power, and while the Oak King may be in charge of things at the beginning of June, by the end of Midsummer he is defeated by the Holly King.

Ancient pagans celebrated the Solstice with torchlight processions and giant bonfires to ritually strengthen the Sun. Another tradition found among European cultures was centered on the need for balance between the Elements of Fire and Water - large wheels were set on fire and rolled downhill into creeks, rivers or lakes, perhaps as a charm against summertime drought.

This is also the traditional time for gathering wild herbs for medicine and for magic, as most are fully grown by Midsummer and the power of this day will add to their benefits. For this reason, Litha is known as Gathering Day in Wales.

The Romans honored this time as sacred to Juno, the wife of Jupiter and goddess of women and childbirth; her name gives us the month of June. The word "solstice" is from the Latin word solstitium, which literally translates to "sun stands still."

Yet within this climax is the whisper and promise of a return to the Dark. As the Light reaches its peak so this is also the moment when the power of the Sun begins to wane. From now on the days grow shorter and the nights grow longer, and we are drawn back into the Dark to complete the Wheel of the Year.

At this time the God, as Oak King, is rich in abundance, but he too surrenders his reign to his brother twin, the Holly King, and the descent begins. But before we welcome the return to the Dark side of the year, and acknowledge this great turning point of the Wheel, we celebrate!

This is a great time to celebrate outdoors with loved ones and especially with children. Take them swimming and then have a bonfire at the end of the day. Let them stay up late to say goodnight to the sun, and celebrate nightfall with fireflies, storytelling, and music. This is also an ideal Sabbat to do some love magic or celebrate a handfasting, since June is the month of marriages and family.

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The Taino peoples celebrate Yellow Corn Mother

The Taino are the peoples indigenous to the Caribbean, Cuba, Haiti and the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, the Antilles, Bahamas and Puerto Rico. Celebrations and ceremonies honoring Yellow Corn Mother are still held each year in midsummer. Traditionally, these rituals and celebrations were held in the central plazas of Taino villages, and many of these plazas were designed to identify the changing seasons, much like Stonehenge and the pyramids.

- **Niman Katsina or Kachina in the Hopi Tradition**

- This is the time of year that the Hopi peoples celebrate Niman to say goodbye to the cooler winter and spring seasons, and welcome in the warmer weather. It is a 16 day festival, complete with shared meals and ceremonial dances. Family members gather from far and wide to reconnect. This is the time of corn planting, and gardens are brimming with sustenance by this time of year.

- **Summer Solstice Rituals in Norway**

- Sunna is the Norse Sun Goddess, and she is honored in that far north country, where the Sun barely sets, with bonfires that last all night long (granted, it is the shortest night of the year).

- **Festival of Sant Joan (Spain):**

- In Barcelona, solstice celebrations consist of street parties, feasts and fireworks in commemoration of St. John the Baptist, the patron saint of Catalonia, whose birthday happens to fall on the solstice. The nocturnal festival is accompanied by large culinary offerings and local musicians all throughout the streets, soundtracked by the almost constant fireworks show, which is thought to give power and reverence to the sun.

Traditions and Symbols of Midsummer

The Bonfire

Traditionally people stayed up all night on Midsummer's Eve to welcome and watch the sunrise. Bonfires were lit on tops of hills, by holy wells, at places held sacred, to honor the fullness of the Sun. At Litha the bonfire really represents a reflection of the Sun at the peak of its strength. The chosen wood would often be Oak and aromatic herbs were scattered into the fire. People danced around the fires and leap through them. Blazing herbs from the sacred bonfire were used to bless the animals. Blazing torches were carried sun wise around homes and fields. Coals from the Midsummer fire were scattered on fields to ensure a good harvest.

The Oak Tree

The Oak Tree worship has always played a large role in Midsummer festivities and trees near wells and fountains were decorated with colored cloths. The Oak King who has ruled the waxing of the year represents strength, courage and endurance, and the Oak has always been particularly significant at Litha. The Celtic name for Oak is 'Duir' which means 'doorway' - we are crossing the threshold, entering the doorway into the second, waning part of the year.

Mistletoe

Mistletoe was and is, highly revered by the Druids. It is regarded as particularly potent when it grows on Oak, the noblest of trees, growing between the worlds of Heaven and Earth. Although it is more commonly associated with Yule and the Winter Solstice, it was often gathered ceremonially at Midsummer when it is regarded as being at the height of its power.

ALL The Herbs & Flowers

All herbs are reaching their peak at this time of year and thus the fullness of their healing and nurturing potency. Giving a bunch of herbs as a gift on Midsummer Day is wonderful. Much of the flower kingdom is reaching for the Sun, wide open, full of color, surrendering their perfume and medicines.

Honey

Our lovely friends the bees are now making honey. Midsummer full moon is known as the 'Honey Moon' for the mead made from honey was now available.

This is often part of handfastings which are also performed at the Summer Solstice.

Mead is regarded as the divine solar drink, with magical and life-restoring properties.

Drink to celebrate and toast the life-giving abundance of the Sun.

Colors of Midsummer

Well, take your pick! The natural world is full of color at this time. Choose blue for the sky, green for the grass, yellow for the Sun. Or red, orange and purple to honor all the blooming flowers. Or choose the colors of the four elements - red, blue, green and yellow. What matters is that you choose and work with the colors that speak to you at each Festival, Ceremony or Ritual.

Earth Mandala

Create an earth mandala, or outdoor altar. Gather seasonal items, stones, crystals, fallen branches and flower petals. Let your inner child go wild. Call forward your prayers for the earth and bask in the sun's warming glow. Honor the bounty and beauty of the solstice season. Align with your essential self and clearly state your intentions or prayers for this cycle of your life. Merge with the fiery force of the sun's power.

Ideas for Your Altar

Oak leaves, oak leaves and more oak leaves. All the abundance of all the herbs, flowers and grasses that are so very available at this time. Candles in Sun colors.

This is a shrine to honor the Sun!

The Queen Of Summer: Artemisia

Ritual Tools: Sacred Work with Mugwort by Selena Fox

Mugwort (*Artemisia vulgaris*) is a versatile sacred herb. It can be used for spiritual cleansing, protection, healing, and consecration, and it can aid dream work, trance, and intuitive development. Associated with the Full Moon and with the Summer Solstice since ancient times, Mugwort also is suitable for rituals year-round. It has been told that John the Baptist wore a garland of Mugwort around his waist and is also called St. Johns herb.

Garland Crowns & Wreaths

A garland crown, or ritual head wreath, can be easily fashioned from one or more freshly cut Mugwort stalks. Select a young, supple stalk at least 2 feet in length. Begin forming the circle of the crown by gently bending the stalk at its midpoint and then interweaving it upon itself. About halfway through the interweaving process, try your crown on and then adjust it so that it fits comfortably on your head. When you are done, trim off any excess leafless stalk. If you prefer to have lots of foliage on your crown, make the initial circlet a bit bigger, and then weave several more additional stalks around it, one at a time. Start each new stalk at a different point along the circle in order to distribute foliage equally around the perimeter. For the freshest look, make your crown within an hour of starting a ritual. Ritual wreaths for decorating doors, shrines, deity images, and altars can be made in a similar fashion, and can be any size. Dried wreaths, hung on or above doorways, are wonderful house blessing charms.

Smudge Sticks

Make a smudge stick from thoroughly dried sprigs of Mugwort leaves. Cut dried stalks with leaves still on them into fairly equal lengths. Twelve to eighteen inches is a convenient size for smudge sticks for most ritual work. Use five to nine stalks per smudge stick bundle. Prior to bundling, remove leaves from the lower two inches of each stalk for use as the handle. Then, form the smudge stick by wrapping the stalks in the bundle together with cotton string, dental floss, thin jute twine, or some other thin, burnable cord of natural fiber. Bind the stalks securely together, but not so tightly that burning will be impaired. Tie the cord around the bundle at the top of the handle area, and then spiral it around the bundle, from the base to the top, and then, crisscrossing, back to the base again. Tie off the cord upon returning to the base, and cut off any surplus cord. Store completed Mugwort smudge sticks in a dry, dark place until needed. To use, light the tip of the smudge stick and let it burn for several moments. Then gently blow out the flame so that only glowing embers and smoke remain. Wave the burning smudge stick back and forth to move the smoke around to consecrate the ritual place and participants. If you wish to use only part of the smudge stick, extinguish its glowing end in a small bucket of moist sand when you are done.

Offerings

Fresh or dried leaves, flowers, and sprigs of Mugwort can be used as an offering in personal and group rituals. Leave Mugwort offerings at a shrine, place on the ground, or cast into a sacred fire.

Wands

Use dried, sturdy, mature stalks that are at least 1/4 inch thick. Carefully trim off any dried side branches and leaves. Then, cut the wand to the desired length. A traditional size for a personal wand is the distance between your elbow and the tip of your middle finger of your dominant hand. Although not as durable as those fashioned of hardwood, Mugwort wands are easy to make and use, and are excellent for work with the Fey and in communing with Ancestors. Because they are light weight, they are good first wands for children. An asperging wand can be made from a fresh sprig of Mugwort. Clip just prior to use. Remove a few leaves on the bottom of the sprig to form the handle, but keep the rest of the leaves on. Dip the Mugwort asperging wand into a chalice or bowl of ritual water, and then flick water droplets onto the place, ritual objects, or participants for consecration.

Sacred Fire Kindling

Dried Mugwort stalks can be burned in combination with Oak and other sacred woods in ceremonial fires. Broken into one to two foot lengths, Mugwort stalks can serve as excellent kindling material in building balefires and sun wheels. Mugwort stalks also can be added once a fire is burning to add aroma and to brighten the flames. Dried Mugwort leaves and flowers also are good additives to sacred fires.

Dream Pillows

For a large sized dream pillow, take a cotton pillow case liner, stuff it with dried Mugwort leaves to the desired thickness, and then securely shut the end. Another type of dream pillow is a Mugwort sachet. Cut two pieces of cloth of equal size. Most Mugwort dream sachets are square or rectangular since they are easiest to make, but they can be any shape and size. Place the right sides of the fabric pieces together and stitch a half-inch seam nearly completely around the edges. Turn the sachet bag inside out, fill it with Mugwort leaves, and then hand sew the opening shut. Place this sachet under your regular pillow or inside its pillowcase. Connect with your Mugwort sachet or pillow just after getting into bed. Touch it and smell its fragrance as you do an affirmation to bless sleep, guide dreaming, and aid dream recall and interpretation upon awaking.

Potions & Washes

Select a focus and then keep it in mind throughout your Mugwort potion preparation process. As you begin, ask the Spirit of Mugwort to guide and aid your work. Bring a quart of good quality water to a boil in an enamelware cauldron or glass cooking pot. Turn off the heat after the water comes to a boil. Add either a handful of dried Mugwort leaves or three handfuls of fresh leaves and flowers. Stir the Mugwort around in the water with a wooden spoon as you chant your intention, such as "Bring Healing to Me" or "Cleansing" or "Power of Protection." The form of your chant is up to you. It can be an incantation that you have learned from others or one you have written or adapted. Build energy as you chant and stir. Then peak the energy, stop stirring, and direct the energy raised into the potion through the stirring spoon and your hands. Cover the potion with a lid. Let the solution steep at least thirteen minutes. Strain through a mesh screen. Use immediately, or, for later use, pour into a glass jar with a tight-fitting lid and store it in a refrigerator for up to three days. Depending on the focus of the potion, you may drink it or add it to your ritual bath water. A Mugwort potion can also be used as cleansing wash for sacred objects, such as crystals and magic mirrors. For use in scrying, place some Mugwort potion in a dark colored ritual bowl and meditatively gaze into it in subdued light. In addition, Mugwort also can be used as a sacred flavoring in ritual brews and foods.

Amulets

At the culmination of a home blessing rite, hang a fresh Mugwort sprig above the main door into your home for protection and good fortune. Hang a Mugwort sprig or wreath above your bed to bless sleep and dreaming. Fill an amulet bag with Mugwort, energize it, and wear it around your neck for healing, spiritual growth, and intuition. Put a pouch of Mugwort in the glove compartment of your vehicle or hang a Mugwort amulet bag from your rear-view mirror to bless your travels. In addition, Mugwort can be combined with other ingredients in making amulets and charms for a variety of purposes.

Sacred Space

Grow Mugwort in a ritual garden. Create a year-round ceremonial circle with a Mugwort hedge. Grow Mugwort next to your home to bless and protect it. Meditate and commune with living Mugwort for relaxation, healing, and inspiration.

Summer Solstice Ritual

Spirits of Fire

Spirits of fire come to us
We will kindle the fire
Spirits of fire come to us
We will kindle the fire
We will kindle the fire
Dance the magic circle round
We will kindle the fire
We will kindle the fire
(back chant)
Fire fire fire
Kindle our spirits higher
In thy flame naught remains
But fire fire fire



Isis Astarte

Isis, Astarte, Diana, Hecate, Demeter, Kali, Inanna

Isis, Astarte, Diana, Hecate, Demeter, Kali, Inanna

Isis, Astarte, Diana, Hecate, Demeter, Kali, Inanna

May the circle be open

May the circle be open

But unbroken

May the love of the Goddess

Be ever in your heart

Merry meet and merry part!

And merry meet again!

- *Starhawk*



Wheel of the Year :: Summer Solstice
Journey Through The Wheel