

## Shamans and Shells



Seashells are so unique and magical, a true gift from the earth and sea. With their beauty, strength, sacred geometry and mathematical precision, it's no wonder shamans frequently utilize them in healing ceremonies and place them on altars.

Shells are quite magical when you stop to think about what they are: the material of soft-bodied invertebrates who create their own protective exoskeletons from the minerals in their bodies and the sea. For this reason, shells are the symbols of independence, self-reliance and feminine power. Shells are often placed on the altar to honor the element of Water. Clean seashells hold food or drink for sacred ritual. Tobacco ceremonies use shells to serve the Peruvian liquid tobacco mixture of plant medicine.

Shells correspond to the planet Venus and to the Moon. Seashells are linked to prosperity and abundance. They have long been used as currency by many world cultures and serve as religious symbols.

## Expanding Sacred

Abalone shells are commonly used as ritual objects for Sage Smudging. The shell is used to catch the ash or hold the burning herbs. My first shell for smudging was not an abalone but a very large, powerful scallop shell that was gifted to me. Some cultures believe it is improper to place Fire in a vessel dedicated to the element of Water.

My only caution about Abalone shells is that sometimes they are coated with toxic lacquer. Make sure your abalone shell is natural and if you do burn herbs in your shell, put a thin layer of sand in the bottom of the shell for safety and to avoid scorching your beautiful ritual object.

Shells such as the nautilus and conch are perfect meditation tools. Hawaiian Kahunas incorporate the powerful sounds of the conch shell in ceremonies. Auger shells are used as headdresses, wands and protective charms. Augers are one of the only shells attributed to the planet Mars.



Expanding Sacred



## The Feminine Healing Power of Coral

Coral has always been a strong healing ally for me in my shamanic practice. I use coral to help strengthen women who need to reconnect with their own Divine power. Red coral is especially fortifying for reminding us of our power, confidence and self-esteem. In Hawaiian Shamanism, Coral represents the bones of the ancestors. Coral is a sacred tool for ancestral healing. I incorporate coral into my ceremonies and altar placement to help me with many healing goals. Coral connects us to our roots, our ancestors and to the Goddess within us all.

