

Spring Equinox

"It is spring again. The earth is like a child that knows poems by heart."

-Rainer Maria Rilke



We come to the cross quarter point in the Wheel where day and night are equal lengths. Nature is awakening and the new life of Spring is on the horizon! The promise of Imbolc can be felt now on the Equinox; the sun growing stronger, the days becoming longer with the earth warming under the sun's bright gaze. Everywhere we witness the signs of life and emergence after the long season of winter. Buds and blossoms burst out filling the world with color once again. Early spring flowers shine with hope. Eggs are hatching and babies are being born. The earth after her long inward sleep is moving towards outward expression of the new growth cycle; a constant reminder that life follows death.

Fire and water pelt the earth in the form of rain and sunshine. Both fire and water hold within them a wild chaos; unrestrained in this celebration of rebirth. There's a union that is fertile and manifest. Joy and hope feel inevitable. It is in this mingling of these two elements where the dance is experienced as a reintegration and opportunity for balance; the equal day and night, the waxing first quarter moon, the spring maiden standing between girl and woman, the masculine and feminine energies and the male and female coming together to ensure that new life is conceived. Here on the equinox we honor that balance~ of light and dark, of the inner and outer world, of joining the conscious with the unconscious. We are moving out of the depths of winter and to grow forward into the rich earth of spring we must fully balance and integrate the lessons learned in the dark.

For everything there is a season and the more we learn to identify with the micro/macrocosm of her cycles the more fully we can embrace these cycles inside ourselves. Winter can be hard for many of us. But it's also a reset in preparation for what is to come. The empty cup cannot continue to pour out nourishment. We need to rest and integrate. We need to reassess and dream. On Imbolc the spark is lit. It's dim but it catches our attention and reminds us that soon it will be time to stir from our slumber. It's time to wake up, open our eyes, stretch our arms and legs and ~move~ with all the wisdom gained and integrated; whole once more.

There is magic in all the seasons but surely there is something undeniable about the collective joy that arises when our hearts think of Spring. A childlike excitement "springs" up at the potential bubbling in this fertile season. For one thing~ the babies! It seems everywhere we look there are new babes being born. If you live anywhere near wildlife or farms and ranches you are bound to witness the newborn

four-leggeds romping about or being tended to by their mamas. Even in the city we have squirrels and baby birds chirping away in their nests. New shoots of grass appear along with the first buds on the trees and the first flowers begin popping up out of the warming earth. All reminders to us to shake off the cold season and energize! Move our bodies and our minds. Activate! This is the season of re-birth!

It is not very difficult to understand why the equinox or Ostara/Eostara/Eostre/Oestre was adapted by the church as the rebirth of Christ. Once again, to attempt conversion it only made sense to keep the celebrations as similar as possible. Easter falls on the first Sunday after the first full moon after the Equinox. Easter even keeps the ancient festival at the root of its name, both Oestre, the Goddess of light that brings fertility of the springtime and of course oestrus, the fertile point of the cycle when ovulation is stimulated. It is no wonder the egg plays such a prominent role in this holy day. Not only for the obvious ovulation cycle of releasing our eggs and hatchlings springing forth from their hard shell, but the *hatching* of new ideas, projects and plans infused with the potential of becoming! Consider the holdover of winter of being inside an egg. Our bodies contract to hold warmth and preserve energy. It is dark and we are slow to move but with the light shining through our thin but strong shell we are revitalized. We push upward and outward stretching our wings or our tails and scales and CRACK open exposing our vision to a new dawn of possibility!

Honor

Ideas to honor Spring Equinox:

- Activate, Ma! Move your body. Slowly at first like a bubbling underground spring and then ever so gently begin to feel the sun on your skin waking you up more and more until you're moving with the energy of the growing fire of the season.
- Invite in the freshness of Spring with some spring cleaning. Open your windows, dust and shake out your linens. Smudge with your favorite herbs or make an herbal spritzer to spray around. Infuse a half cup each of lemon verbena and rose petals in a quart of water and add a few drops of mint oil. Put in a spray bottle. Delightful!
- Plant some lily bulbs or bring in some purchased "Easter" lilies. These pre-Christian symbols of white lilies were revered as representation of our beautiful self-generating vulvas. Celebrate and reclaim the sacredness of our sexuality with this powerful living lily spirit.
- Read up on the story of Persephone. Exercise your resource-ability and dig into her pre-patriarchal story. Reclaim Persephone as sovereign before the so-called abduction by Hades. Reclaim Persephone as the powerful virgin maiden standing in her own autonomy.
- Dye eggs of course! This is a lovely remembering. If you have wee ones or even gather with your adult community, egg hunts are such fun! But you also have the option of blowing eggs, decorating them and

making window hangings or creating spring altars with eggs as your center piece. Get extra witchy if you like and and infuse your prayers and wishes into the dye baths. Please use natural dyes and decorations when possible so they can go back to the earth. You can crush and compost your egg shells at seasons end or after hard boiling them to eat!

- Get outside. There is probably still a chill in the air and most likely even snow. But it's so hard to stay inside! The signs are everywhere. Take walks. Move your body and breathe in the fresh air and new possibility.

- Start your seeds (likely indoors) if you're heading into a growing season.

- Spend some time with your journal. Consider all that has been steeping and resting and what is now stirring and asking for your attention. What lessons have you learned? What feels balanced and what is still asking for balance? What is being integrated? What is rising from the depths of you? What is breaking through?