



Ask Rose Ariadne
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Celtic Wicca - A Unique and Intricate Path

The word 'Celtic' is derived from the Greek word 'Keltoi' and refers to the people who lived beyond the Alps. In modern geography, Keltoi included France, Germany and northern Italy; but did not originally include Scotland, Ireland, Wales and England as the Greeks were unaware of its existence altogether.

The terms 'Celtic Wicca' and 'Celtic Witchcraft' are often used interchangeably, but are in truth not one and the same. Wicca is a modern neo-pagan movement, founded by Gerald Gardner. Celtic Wicca refers to a specific Wiccan path which incorporates several of the elements of the Celtic Tradition into their practices, beliefs and rituals. Celtic Witchcraft, on the other hand, is the traditional Craft as practiced by Celtic Witches for centuries, perhaps even millennia. There are sadly very few of the original and truly traditional Celtic Witches around today.

The traditions, practices and beliefs of Celtic Wicca are relatively diverse and to some extent dependent on the lineage of the coven. Each coven within a single lineage may also have their own special deities, rituals, traditions, practices and beliefs. The very nature of Wicca promotes eclecticism – irrespective of the path that is followed.

Strong spirituality, a reverence for the Earth and respect for everything the earth contains, form the basis of Celtic Wicca. An integral part of this religion is the love for and worship of Celtic Goddesses and Gods.

The pantheon is three tiered. On the first tier you will find the children and subjects of Danu / Anu (the Mother Goddess) and Dagda (the Father God). On the second tier are the children of the first tier Gods and Goddesses. They sometimes bumped into humans and nature spirits. Nature spirits form the third tier of the pantheon.





The Celts celebrate the Triple Goddess. She is Danu/Anu in Her maiden aspect, Badb in Her mother aspect and Ceridwen in Her crone aspect.

Although there have been some historic "battles of the sexes" in traditional Celtic Witchcraft, Celtic Wicca opted for parity and peace. Unlike Dianic Wicca, where there is either female dominance or exclusivity, Celtic Wicca has a gender-equal belief. Of interest in the Celtic pantheon is that the female goddesses are the warriors (Badb, Brigantia, Macha, Nemain etc.) and also that the Goddesses have multiple portfolios (Brigid = Healing, Fertility, Poetry and the Forge), whereas the Gods generally only have a single task to accomplish.

In general, Celtic Wiccans celebrate exactly the same 8 Sabbats as Wiccans on other paths. Some may add additional celebrations such as the raising of the May-Pole Ceremony. The Celtic New Year was also celebrated on November 1, the day after Samhain. The lunar calendar is an important aspect of Celtic Wicca. Unique to this path is that each one of the 13 lunar months is named after a plant or a tree.

In example:

- * Birchmoon: 24 December – 20 January
- * Rowanmoon: 21 January – 17 February
- * Ashmoon: 18 February – 17 March

Until

- * Eldermoon 25 November – 22 December

The 23rd of December does not resort under any moon and is termed "Secret of the Unhewn Dolmen".

A further unique element in Celtic Wicca is that they count the nights, not the days in reckoning dates. In addition, feasts, rituals and celebrations were based on the moon, The Celtic day also started at Midnight.

On the Celtic path, great emphasis is placed on the natural world. Herbs, colors, the Fae, plants, trees, flowers, crystals etc are studied in depth from both a healing and a magickal perspective.

Unlike the ceremonial approach to magick of the Alexandrian Wiccans, Celtic Wiccans hold a very practical and earthy view of this art. Celts do not see magick as a separate practice at all, but as an integrated aspect of daily life. Magick becomes a part of the food preparation, the household, the jewelry they wear and the cutlery they use. Celtic Wicca is in all probability the only Wiccan path that draws extensively on nature spirits' assistance during magick.





Numbers are considered important in both spell crafting and casting as well as in mundane life. The numbers of power in Celtic Wicca are 3, 5, 7, 9 and 13. In example, if a piece of cloth is used, it may be 5" x 5" in size or a spell may be repeated thrice for extra power. Their reverence for trees goes beyond naming the lunar months after trees. During magick, wands fashioned from specific woods and burning specific woods during rituals and celebration lend specific powers to the spells and rituals respectively.

The path of Celtic Wicca will not be mastered within a year or even five. It is literally a lifelong quest of practice, study and dedication. Its intricacy and variety is greater than any other Wiccan path, the traditions it is based on ancient and the mythology it draws from, rich. For these reasons, Celtic Wicca is only suitable for those who have the strength of conviction, the ability to persevere and the desire to succeed.

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