

# Summer Solstice



Aimee Stewart




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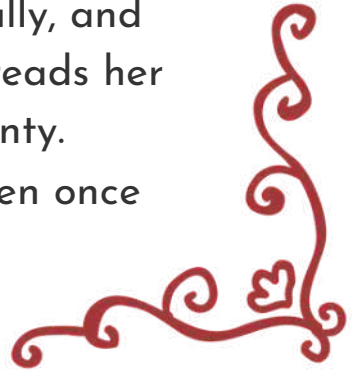
is traditionally held on the 21st December. Traditions all around the world honour this time as a sacred celebration of life and the divine power of the sun. It is celebrated as Litha by the Pagan folk, and Alban Hefin by Druids. But many places around the world hold secular festivals at this time of year, many of which are rooted in the astronomical observance of this date.

At the Summer Solstice, the sun is at the highest point and it is the longest day of the year. It occurs when one of 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 the day with the longest period of daylight and shortest night of the year.



Light is at her fullness, fruits are ripening, and she heralds the hottest part of summer, blazing with heat and celebrating a triumph of Life and the crowning glory of the land. At Summer Solstice, Goddess reaches the point in her cycle of creation where it is time to let go. Our Mother gives to us unconditionally, and this is the beginning of the feasting time, where she spreads her abundance before us, to nourish us with Her loving bounty.

Following the solstice, the daylight hours begin to shorten once again as we begin our spiral back towards Autumn.



# My Sitting Down Place

A poem by Gail Kay,  
Proserpine, north Queensland

I go down to the creek  
Where the water gurgles  
Joyfully  
As it hurries along  
Over the shining sand and pebbles  
To its destiny  
With the sea.  
Dappled sunlight  
Flits and moves  
Across the water, over the creek bank,  
And the birds sing happily  
To the accompaniment  
Of insects and crickets.  
I sit in silence as I soak it all into my soul.  
Peace flows  
From the water  
To my heart.  
Whatever life brings me  
I now can face  
Because of this,  
My sitting down place!

Source: My Sitting Down Place - Creative Spirits,  
retrieved from

<https://www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/arts/poems/my-sitting-down-place>

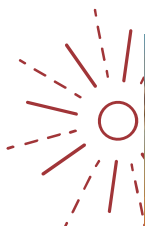






# Celebrating **SUMMER SOLSTICE**

*Unsurprisingly, fire is a central theme in the celebration of Summer Solstice in the Northern Hemisphere. Although bonfires are prohibited at this time of year in our region, we can still celebrate by making our own fire wheels of wreaths made with Christmas Bush, sunflowers or any other red, yellow, or orange flowers.*



Although traditionally fire may have played an important role, here water is the element most likely to be sought out, with days at the beach, pool, or by the river.

A bit of trivia: William Shakespeare associated Midsummer with witchcraft in at least three of his plays. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Macbeth*, and *The Tempest* all contain references to magic on the night of the summer solstice.

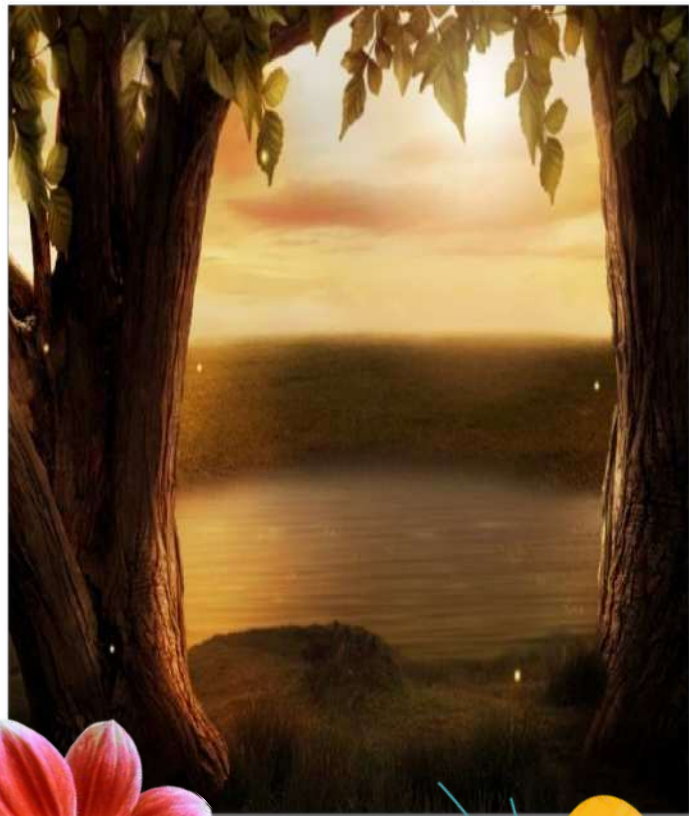




# Celebrating **SUMMER SOLSTICE**



*As the sun rises (or at noon if an all-nighter doesn't suit you), stand up tall and raise your arms high to honour Sun's power and expand your chest and your heart chakra. Take a deep breath, and breathe out a great sigh to exhale all the negative energy from your body, and with your next in-breath visualise the sun's rays filling up your heart and your whole body. Breathe slowly and steadily and build up the light within you; will every breath into your inner eye, until your whole aura is radiating light. At this point you might like to recite a prayer to the sun.*



This summer solstice, see if you can call in the special magic of the season, by going out at dusk, a traditional liminal faery time, and sitting in vigil until sunrise. Find somewhere special, a high place, or a grove of trees, and put out a bowl of cream as an offering. Cast a circle of rose petals around you, and ask that the good spirits of the place show themselves to you. Sit quietly and meditate upon the turning year and the beauty of the earth, breathe slowly and seek some stillness within. Who knows what you will see.





# Correspondences

## SUMMER SOLSTICE



### Crystals

Sunstone, Jasper, Ruby, Peridot, Carnelian, Citrine, Moss Agate, Jade, Emerald, Topaz

### Colours

Gold  
Blue  
Green  
Yellow  
Red

### Deities

Gaia  
Hestia  
Juno  
Amaterasu  
Sunna  
Freya  
Hathor  
Hera  
Isis  
Danu  
Pele  
Bright  
Vesta

### Animals

Bees  
Butterflies  
Phoenix  
Dragon  
Fairies  
Robin  
Horse  
Snake



### Incense

Cedar  
Clove  
Frankincense  
Lavender  
Lemon  
Mint  
Myrrh  
Pine  
Rose  
Sage



### Elements

Abundance  
Sunwheel  
Lantern procession  
Singing  
Feasting  
Outdoor activities  
Sea shells  
Coral,  
Water,  
Fire  
Ripening  
Anything that celebrates bountiful life, strength, power, success, passion and self-love



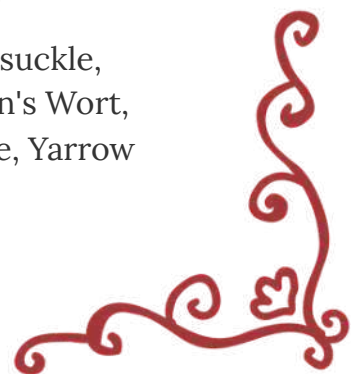
### Food

All seasonal fruit and vegetables, Ale and Mead, Cherries, Honey Cakes, Strawberries



### Plants

Chamomile, Daisy, Fern, Honeysuckle, Lily, Mugwort, Oak, Rue, St John's Wort, Sunflower, Vervain, Wild Thyme, Yarrow



# folklore

In addition to the polarity between land and sky, Summer Solstice is a time to find a balance between fire and water. According to Ceisiwr Serith, in his book *The Pagan Family*, European traditions celebrated this time of year by setting large wheels on fire and then rolling them down a hill into a body of water. He suggests that this may represent the sun at its strongest yet also the day at which it begins to weaken. Another possibility is that the water mitigates the heat of the sun, and subordinating the sun wheel to water may prevent drought.

No celebration is complete without a meal to go along with it. For Summer Solstice, celebrate with foods that honor the fire and energy of the sun, and a tasty batch of Midsummer mead.

Did you know that English villagers used to set a big bonfire on Midsummer's eve, to keep evil spirits away? or that carrying a bit of rue in your pocket can keep the Fae away during the summer solstice?

*The Summer Solstice is a time to reflect on your personal growth and the meaning of the season of light and growth. This is the moment of our year when there is the most light available to us. In terms of consciousness, it is when we are the most present to ourselves and who we know ourselves to be — the Sun represents the light of all life and consciousness. Seeds are planted in the Earth as well as the seeds of our souls. It's a time of renewal and abundance, a time of love and expansion, as the summer sun unfolds the leaves on the trees, so do our souls open to receive the light of source to illuminate that which is within each of us.*

# Solstice Astrology

By Roseleen McNally - The Thirsty Soul



The Summer Solstice is when there is the most light, sun energy available for us to use. We have the inner fire and outward focused energy to do things. We can nurture our intentions so they grow into our late summer and autumn harvest.



The sun gives us the life force energy to support us with the strength and will to succeed and achieve our destiny, life purpose and dreams. In [Western] astrology, the Sun represents the essence of your being – the Self, your personality, your ego and what makes you uniquely YOU. It's your identity and how you face the world or are seen in the world. The fire energy of the sun is associated with will power, conscious choice and invites us to take risks, to tap into our courage and live a life of passion, creativity and inspiration.

Shining our Light is one of the most beautiful things we can do and also one of the most terrifying. Some people will celebrate your light and others will want to dim it down. For some, your light will be considered 'too much'. Your light may make others uncomfortable.

Shining your light will require you to possibly learn to not give a feck about how others think you 'should' be or their fears about you shining your inner light. We always have the opportunity to reclaim more and more of our light as it's not a one time thing. So shine on.





# Indigenous Wisdom

from Aunty Alison

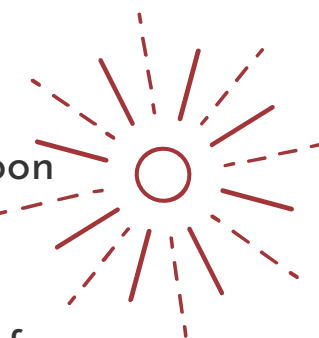


Galaagaarr (hot) is the Gumbaynggirr name for this season, which comprises December, January and February.

Unlike European festivals when particular plants or animals are singled out as having significance, for indigenous peoples all animals and plants are sacred. Animals and plants are totems tied to the names of individuals - there is no separation. No totem could be harmed or eaten, and in this way life and the things that support it were protected. Totems that could not be eaten were left for neighbouring tribes, thus protecting the food chain.



Ancestors also had totems of the moon and stars and waterholes and would speak to these entities. Nothing was more or less important at any time of year.



This time of year is the time for jew fish and flathead, and the bream are coming in. Everyone could eat them, unless you had them as your totem.

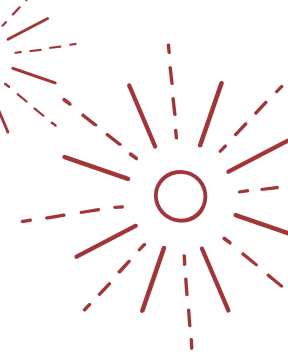


# Summer Solstice Prayer

We come together to celebrate the Summer Solstice: the zenith of the sun and the rich fullness of the year. Life swells into the sensual abundance of summer; the earth's blossoms, colours and perfumes are vivid and plentiful; our senses feed upon the delights of long, warm days and balmy, scent-filled nights. Under the warming touch of the sun we open to the beauty all around and within us. The Goddess' desire has found its peak, and in her cry of pleasure the world is embraced by her joy and love. We too surrender ourselves to this moment.



We call upon the Goddess as Mother of Sweetness, Lady of life's abundant blessings. Yours is the rich earth, the fertile ground of our being; yours is the explosion of life, colour and joy that enraptures our senses and feeds our bodies and souls. You are the heady scent of honeysuckle and rose, the cool peace of forests, a field of poppies and corn chamomile vibrant with the sun. You are the vitals rains, lush rivers and wetlands teeming with life; the deep wells and sparkling springs that feed our souls and quench our thirst. Yours is the moon and the ever-changing tides; the hem of your gown is the vast ocean, its salt water cleansing and healing our deepest wounds. You are the keeper of the abundant and over-flowing Chalice of life that renews and nourishes, and your cup is the place within us that can never run dry. Each plant and animal, each drop of water, each clod of earth is radiant with your spirit. Mother of Sweetness, Ecstasy of the Earth, open us to your joy and fulfilment; brighten each cell with the strength of your love. Please bless us with your presence.



# Mamaragan

From West Arnhem Land

Not a god/goddess but an ancestral being in charge of lightning. So definitely a Summer being.

He speaks with a booming voice of pure thunder.

When the mood takes him, he rides a vast black storm cloud across the sky, throwing great bolts of lightning down to Earth in a terrifying display of power.

So it's something of a disappointment to discover that when it's not raining he actually lives in a puddle.



'The Sound of Lightning' – Ainslie Roberts



Did you know....

The Romans, who had a festival for anything and everything, celebrated this time as sacred to Juno, the wife of Jupiter and goddess of women and childbirth. She is also called Juno Luna and blesses women with the privilege of menstruation. The month of June was named for her, and because Juno was the patroness of marriage, her month remains an ever-popular time for weddings [in the Northern Hemisphere]. This time of year was also sacred to Vesta, goddess of the hearth. The matrons of Rome entered her temple on Midsummer and made offerings of salted meal for eight days, in hopes that she would confer her blessings upon their homes.







# Introduction To Summer Goddesses

**Amaterasu** (Shinto): This solar goddess is the sister of the moon deity and the storm god of Japan, and is known as the goddess "from which all light comes".

**Aestas** (Roman) While there is not much known about this Goddess of Summer, She stands by the throne of Phoebus, the Sun-God. Her name means summer or summer heat

**Beiwe** (Sámi) Goddess of Lapland, she was celebrated at the summer solstice for providing the light the plants needed to grow.

**Djanggal Sisters** (Aboriginal Goddesses from Arnhemland) These daughters of the sun gave birth to all the plants and animals. Their magical power objects were stolen from them by their brothers.

**Hestia** (Greek): This goddess watched over domesticity and the family. She was given the first offering at any sacrifice made in the home.

**Saule** (Lithuanian) Golden haired Goddess, she rode across the sky in a chariot pulled by two white horses with golden manes, battling with the powers of darkness.

**Sulis Minerva** (Celtic, Roman): When the Romans occupied the British Isles, they took the aspects of the Celtic sun goddess, Sulis, and blended her with their own goddess of wisdom, Minerva.

**Sunna or Sol** (Germanic): Little is known about this Norse goddess of the sun, but she appears in the Poetic Eddas as the sister of the moon god.

## Gardening Goddesses



I hope that your gardens are looking lush, beautiful and abundant, and that the pests and birds aren't taking more than their fair share. May your Summer plates be full of delicious homegrown goodies and your altar overflowing with flowers from your garden.

If you're lucky enough to be blessed with green thumbs and garden space then here is a list of vegies, herbs etc. to plant now in the mid north coast of NSW area. This list is not exhaustive, and there are many other fabulous plants you could add to it. Remember that much of the region is on the cusp between temperate zone and sub-tropical zone, so you may need to experiment if you don't already know where the warm and cool parts of your garden are situated. Have fun and good luck with your gardening.



# The Etymology of Flowers

Botanical Name



**Rose**  
*Rosa*

Rose comes from French, translating to "pink."  
Love, passion



**Sunflower**  
*Helianthus*

Named after its tendency to turn to face the sun.  
*Helianthus* comes from Greek *helios*, "sun," and *anthos*, "flower"


Adoration, loyalty, and longevity



**Gerbera Daisy**  
*Gerbera jamesonii*

Named after Traugott Gerber, the German botanist who helped discover them

Innocence, cheerfulness, joy



**Lily**  
*Lilium*

Derived from Latin *lilia*, which may have come from a corrupted pronunciation of a word from an extinct Eastern Mediterranean language

Humility, devotion, restored innocence after death



**Orchid**  
*Orchis*

From the Greek *órkhis*, meaning "testicle," because of the shape of some orchids' roots

Fertility, elegance, luxury



**Hydrangea**  
*Hydrangea macrophylla*

From Greek *húdōr*, "water," and *ángos*, "jar or vessel," after the shape of its seed pods

Gratitude, honesty, deep understanding



**Tulip**  
*Tulipa*

From French *tulipe*, tracing back to the Persian word *dulband*, "turban," after the shape of the bloom

True love, hope, royalty



**Daisy**  
*Bellis perennis*

Old English *dæges ēage*, "day's eye," because it opens in the morning and closes at night

Innocence, purity, motherhood, new beginnings

Etymology

Symbolism

## The Etymology and Symbolism of 50 Flowers

- Amaranthus
- Basil
- Beans
- Californian Poppies
- Celeriac
- Chinese Cabbage
- Cockscomb
- Coriander
- Cress
- Cucumber
- Eggplant
- Fennel
- Gourd



- Kale
- Marigolds
- Maize
- Mustard
- Okra
- Oregano
- Pumpkin
- Radish
- Rockmelon
- Sorghum
- Sunflowers
- Sweetcorn
- Watermelon



# Easy Traditional White Sangria

An easy, 8-ingredient (1-pitcher!) recipe for traditional white wine sangria. Brandy and wine recommendations included, and seasonally adaptable!

Author Minimalist Baker

Ingredients

US Customary - Metric

- 1 medium lime (thinly sliced into rounds)
- 1 medium lemon (thinly sliced into rounds)
- 1/4 cup organic cane sugar (or sub agave, powdered coconut sugar, maple syrup, or stevia to taste // for drier sangria, omit)
- 1/4 cup apple brandy (Laird's Apple Jack brand // or sub brandy, but apple brandy has a subtler apple flavor + smoother, gentler finish)
- 1/2 medium organic green apple (cored, skin on, chopped into small pieces)
- 1 medium ripe peach or nectarine (thinly sliced)
- 1 cup sliced strawberries
- 1 750-ml bottle dry, crisp white wine (chilled // I prefer white table wine from Spain or Portugal (I liked Alianca brand!) but Sauvignon Blanc adds a nice complexity, and Pinot Grigio works, too)

## FOR SERVING

- Ice or frozen berries for serving
- Sparkling water (optional)
- Fresh mint (optional)

## Instructions

Add lime, lemon, and sugar (or other sweeteners) to a large pitcher (or use multiple pitchers if making a larger batch) and muddle with a muddler or gently crush with a wooden spoon for 45 seconds.

Add apple brandy and muddle again to combine for 30 seconds. Add apple, nectarine, and strawberries and stir to incorporate. Then add wine and stir once more.

Taste and adjust flavor as needed, adding more sweetener of choice for sweetness, lemon or lime juice for acidity, or fruit. Stir to combine.

Add ice or frozen berries and stir once more to chill. Serve as is or with a bit more ice and mint (optional). To dilute the mixture, top off glasses with a bit of sparkling water (optional).

Store leftovers covered in the refrigerator for up to 48 hours, though best when enjoyed within the first 1-2 days.







# Devonshire Honey Cake

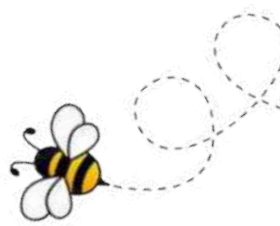
Honey is a wonderful food to represent Litha. One of the names often given for the Full Moon at Litha is 'Honey Moon' or 'Mead Moon' as this is a time when the bee hives are rich with honey.

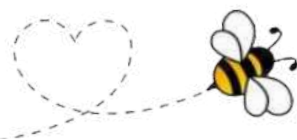


## Ingredients

- 250g Yellowbox Honey
- 225g unsalted butter, cut into pieces
- 100g dark muscovado sugar
- 3 lg eggs, beaten
- 300g self-raising flour
- Additional 2 tbs Yellowbox honey to glaze cake when cooked.

## Instructions

- 
- Pre-heat oven to 140C fan-forced, 160C conventional. Butter and line a 20cm springform cake tin.
  - In a medium pan, place butter pieces, honey and sugar. Melt slowly over low heat.
  - When the mixture has combined as a liquid, increase the heat and boil for 1 minute.
  - Leave to cool for 15 - 20 minutes (this is to prevent the eggs cooking when added).
  - Beat the eggs into the honey mixture using a wooden spoon.
  - Sift the flour into a large bowl, and pour in honey and egg mixture, beating until smooth.
  - Pour into prepared tin and bake for 50 minutes to 1 hour until cake is well risen and golden brown. Cake will spring back when pressed.
  - When cooked turn cake onto a wire rack.
  - Warm 2 tbs honey in a small pan until runny; brush over the top of the cake when warm to create glaze. Leave cake to cool.
  - Keep cake wrapped in an airtight tin for up to 4 days (assuming you haven't eaten it by then)



*As the sun spirals its  
longest dance, cleanse  
us.*

*As nature shows bounty  
and fertility, bless us.*

*Let all things live with  
loving intent and fulfill  
their truest destiny.*

*Blessed Be!*



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