

# SWORD & CHALICE

Wiccan Church of Canada

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SPRING EQUINOX - BELTANE



Although the passage between Spring Equinox and Beltane often sees us celebrating Fertility and rebirth, there are also the rites of the Beltane Fires. These fires are born of the needs and shifts incurred in our spiritual passage from the spark of Imbolc to the purifying flame of Beltane. It is a fire that burns away the old, clearing the way for the new.

Fire, in a very real sense carries within it the essence of all forms of magic as magic is a process of change. It is the realm of dedication, energy, and divinity; it is considered the most physical and spiritual of the elements as it leads to a new incarnation of reality through its transformational quality.

The Fire element has invoked a religious and spiritual awe since the dawn of time and we always embraced it in our seasonal rituals, its shifting form is the nurturing hearth, the creative forge, the joyful light of celebration, and the agent of change. The allure of the changing aspects of fire has fascinated mankind across time, cultures and seasons; it is this very aspect which has led to the three most common Fire rituals known.

Divination, through watching and attuning to fire, the mind seems to relax its rigid hold on consciousness, ones eyes grow heavy as the mind grows lighter and we open our psyche like a light sensitive flower. Shapes, images, and symbolism presents to the waking mind. To open up to the power of Fire within you, you can light a candle and see what the living flame has to show you.

Purification, through fire has existed as a ritual since the nature of fire was discovered. It is found in the crucible of human experience, the distillation of a pure essence, the sterilization of negatives, or the transformational act of divine consumption of ones being. It is through these understandings of these elemental attributes that Fire is an agent of change which has often been used as an avenue which leads to further spiritual development.

Dedication through Fire is often viewed as sacrificial; one offers themselves up to Divinity through its essence, in the hope of spiritual unity. Using Fire as a vehicle of intention offers an object or individual the means of unconditional and essential transformation, therefore altering it into a new state of existence or purpose.

The Wiccan Church of Canada has offered open Wiccan temples facilitating classes, rituals, and training to the public since 1979. Drawing on resources available in our own communities and temples, we are a diverse, accepting, caring, group of people united by our love of the Gods and our own journeys. W.C.C. rituals are open to one and all, regardless of one's level of knowledge in the Craft. There is something for everyone, an experienced practitioner or someone who's vaguely curious. We hope our newsletter will reflect the diversity of our membership by offering the pagan community articles, resources, local events, links & libraries and the W.C.C calendar.

**DUE TO THE CURRENT SITUATION WITH COVID-19, IN-PERSON CLASSES AND RITUALS CONTINUE TO BE SUSPENDED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.**

However we are pleased to offer free online weekly classes alternate Saturday & Sunday.

As well as a social Meet & Greet Wednesday nights via the ZOOM conferencing app.

If you wish to participate, please email LPH.WCC@gmail.com with your email address.

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## Essential Guide to Oils

Jennie Harding

ISBN: 978-1-78678-199-4.

Watkins Publishing

[www.watkinspublishing.com](http://www.watkinspublishing.com)

Anyone who know me or about me, knows, I Love Books!!! Most, of the books that made their way to me, have cost me a pretty penny. However, books do not have to be pricey to be part of any good book collection. I found a gem at Indigo Books. I always go to the \$10 and less section, for cook books (think feast foods) and anything metaphysical (dream books, astrology, wiccan) Since we are

entering Spring, that (to me,) translates as entering the season of scent, also known as aromatherapy!

Jennie Hardings Essential Guide to Oils, normally priced at about \$18.00 CDN, was purchased for \$8.00 plus tax. At 288 pages, it's a steal.

The book is in two parts. Part One – The Power of Essential Oils, is filled with information about safety - Including don't swallow/drink essential oils, safe handling, safe storage, age appropriate oils, and which oils not to wear should you go out into the sun. Well written and full of hints, tips, and practical knowledge.

Part Two – A Guide to Oils, discusses which oils can be used for various purposes. The section is also broken down into colour coded sections with oils that are useful for various conditions. Each page is broken

down into: Safety First, Supporting the Spirit, Easing the Mind, and Healing the Body. Each section also includes key words to describe the scent, and blend recipes you may wish to create.

For example,

*Lemongrass: Safety first – Non toxic, but don't use more than 2 drops as it may irritate the skin if used in a bath. Supporting the Spirit – cuts through the emotional fog, and encourages positivity. Easing the Mind – clears mental clutter, may chase away bad dreams or insomnia.*

Remember: Scent can add a layer to your magical working as well. You can use essential oils added to Epsom Salt for a ritual bath . You can also use, an oil infused clay fired disc, close by, when you are trying to write a ritual, or studying for an exam.

Happy Reading!

## THE SABBAT TABLE

### Naturally Dyed Eggs

*Per cup of water use the following:*

- 1 cup chopped purple cabbage = blue on white eggs, green on brown eggs
- 1 cup red onion skins = lavender or red eggs
- 1 cup yellow onion skins = orange on white eggs, rusty red on brown eggs
- 1 cup shredded beets = pink on white eggs, maroon on brown eggs
- 2 tablespoons ground turmeric = yellow eggs
- 1 bag Red Zinger tea = lavender eggs

**Add one tablespoon white vinegar to every cup of dye.**



**As an emblem of life, the egg is the perfect magical tool. It is recognized globally as a symbol of fertility, new life, growth and prosperity.**

- Make a wish: Write a wish on a hard boiled egg, then leave it in the woods or natural setting as an offering.
- Bury a raw egg in the garden. A buried egg in your spring garden blesses the harvest for fruitful yield.
- Try Ovomancy, a method of divination which involves dropping an egg white into boiling water and then reading the shape it takes.
- Include them in kitchen magic. Get creative! Scramble them, boil them, or bake them in quiches.
- Leave eggs at the graveside of a loved one to bless their eternal life and heal grieving souls.
- Craft some candles, eggshells make excellent candle vessels. Use natural beeswax and a cotton wick, and they are also 100% biodegradable.



## UPCOMING CLASSES

- Mar 21 Patrons & Shrines
- Mar 27 Divination (other)
- Apr 4 Comparative Mythology
- Apr 10 Sacrifice
- Apr 18 Herbs (Identification)
- Apr 24 Beltane
- May 2 Herbs (Uses)

All classes are being offered via Zoom. If you would like to sign up for the classes, please send an email to [LPH.WCC@gmail.com](mailto:LPH.WCC@gmail.com)

## AS ABOVE SO BELOW

- Mar 20 Spring Equinox
- Mar 26 First Quarter
- Mar 28 Full Moon
- Apr 4 Last Quarter
- Apr 11 New Moon
- Apr 20 First Quarter
- Apr 22/23 - Lyrids Meteor Shower
- Apr 27 Full / Supermoon

SPRING'S  
FIRST  
HEARTBEAT  
HONOURS  
WINTER'S  
LAST  
BREATH

## NATURES GARDEN WITH GLENYS

### Wood Sorrel

*Common Wood sorrel, Fairy Bells, Wood Sour, Cuckoo's Meat, Sourgrass, Sour Trefoil, Stickwort, Surelle, Three Leaved Grass, False Shamrock (Oxalis regnellii or Oxalis triangularis)*



Wood sorrels are common spring plants that occur in most regions in the world except polar regions. They are often found in woods and wild places. They can readily be identified because of the of trio of heart-shaped leaves. Most plants have three leaves but some varieties do have four. Because of this, it is falsely identified as a Shamrock. There is no Shamrock plant perse. The word is derived from Irish seamair óg which when translated means "young clover". However, the wood sorrel can be an easy substitute and is sold world-wide around St. Patrick's Day.

The plant flowers have five petals and come in a variety of colours ranging from white to shades of pink, purple, blue and yellow. Likewise, the leaves can be green or purple or brownish red. As indicated, most of the varieties have three leaves but there is at least one Mexican variety with four leaves.

All parts of the wood sorrel are edible including their tuberous roots and immature green seed pods and are used in many cultures for food and medicine. The plants contain oxalic acid (hence the genus name Oxalis) which gives wood sorrel it's characteristic sour taste which is reminiscent of lemons. Wood sorrel is high in vitamin C. In moderate dosages, wood sorrel is cooling, diuretic, and soothing to the stomach or digestion. It can be used in a poultice to reduce swelling. Wood sorrel varieties also make wonderful natural dye plants

Magically, wood sorrel is considered feminine. It is an earth plant and is tied to the planet Venus. It is useful in health and healing spells and well as protection spells for hearth and family. Because of its association to the Shamrock, it can also be used for spells concerned with luck. This woodland plant is often associated with fairies, elves and other woodland spirits.

***As always, know what you are picking before ingesting***

Beryl, Paul. A Compendium of Herbal Magic. Washington: Phoenix Publishing, Inc., 1998

The Master Book of Herbalism. Washington: Phoenix Publishing, Inc., 1984

Culpeper, Nicolas. The Complete Herbal. Kessinger Publishing, 2005

## CELEBRATING THE WHEEL WITH XYLIA



Vernal Equinox – Spring – the images that immediately come to mind are warming days, planting seeds, or early flowers. But then, we look out the window....not quite the case. So how can we celebrate Spring when we are still feeling the effects of Winter?

- Add to the God's strength to move the Wheel of the Year – light a candle (yellow if you have it) and sit with it a while visualizing the Sun growing stronger and warming the earth, softening it to allow new shoots to break through.
- Celebrate the Goddess, as she awakens from her winter sleep – decorate your altar with flowers, light a candle (green if you have it) and sit for a while meditating on Her awakening, tender shoots stretching, reaching up to be warmed by the growing Sun.
- Start to plan your garden – draw out your plan, or gather your seeds, and place a candle in the centre of the drawing/packs of seeds and focus the energy from the flame, the Sun, connecting and adding energy to your plans.
- It is the time of Air – go for a walk (or wrap up and sit in the backyard) and breathe – be aware of every breath - with every inhale take in renewed life, re-energizing you, and with every exhale, let go of the Winter sleep, the darkness, the sleepiness of life.
- Use the colours of Air in your life – yellow (physical), gray (mental), violet (spiritual) – you could even write a piece in honour of the Gods on a piece of coloured paper
- Like spring cleaning of your house, cleanse your mind to be open for new growth that the coming months will bring. Light a candle for focus, and write down some of the negatives in your life – things you want to clear away. Carefully, light the paper from the candle (use a baking tray underneath for safety). As the paper burns, visualize those things melting away, like the snow melts with the growing Sun.
- Take a moment to be grateful for being alive. Grateful for life springing anew - for seeing the tender shoots of spring flowers poking through the earth (or snow), for the buds just starting on the trees, for the warmth of a growing Sun on your face. Listen to the sound of birds in the morning and know they sing of life and the turning wheel.

There are so many ways you can celebrate the Vernal Equinox – the Gods move the Wheel of the Year, so let's give them our thanks by honouring their amazing cycle of death and re-birth.

Blessed Equinox!!!

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"Spring is when life's alive in everything."

- Christina Rossetti

## The Hag Shack

Hag: a woman considered to be knowledgeable in matters such as herbal healing, magic charms, or other traditional lore

1185 Tecumseh Rd. E, Windsor

<https://www.hagshack.com/>

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