



Ask Rose Ariadne
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The Witchcraft Sabbats

Witchcraft/Wicca is a positive, earthy religion, which celebrates Life and Nature in dedication of the Goddess and God. The Goddess is symbolized by the moon and is often referred to as the Triple Goddess – Maiden, Mother and Crone. The 12 to 13 Full Moons of the Year are celebrated during the Esbats, which are in a way, lesser Sabbats.

The God is symbolized by the Sun. The movement of the sun through the heavens manifest in seasonal changes. This movement is symbolized as a wheel by Witches/Wiccans and referred to as the Wheel of the Year. The interaction between the Goddess and God is celebrated at eight specific points on the Wheel. Four of the celebrations correspond with the two equinoxes and the two solstices. The four remaining celebrations each honor a figurative phase of Nature and the associated festivities can be traced back to time immemorial on many parts of the globe. These eight celebrations are called Sabbats.

The Sabbats are days of power. They tell a tale of the Goddess and the God and how Their interaction affects us on earth.

Yule (+/- 21 December)

Yule marks the Winter Solstice and the shortest day of the Year. It is at this time when the Goddess gives birth to the God. As the God is symbolized by the Sun, this celebration also marks the rebirth of the Sun. From the 21st of December, the days gradually start growing in length as the God gains strength, each day passing marking one day closer to the bounty of spring. This day reminds Witches/Wiccans that the ultimate product of Death is Re-birth – a comforting and joyous occasion indeed.

Imbolc (2 February)

The Goddess has recovered from giving Birth to the God. The God too has developed into a young, lively Boy. As the rays of the Sun linger increasingly





longer on the recovered Earth, Life gradually starts re-awakening. It is a time of new beginnings, a time to renew old commitments, a time to cleanse your spirit and your surroundings, and ultimately a time to start afresh.

Ostara (+/- 21 March)

Ostara coincides with the Spring equinox and marks the beginning of Spring. This is also the day when light and darkness are of equal length. The Goddess is clad in all Her finery and the God, as He moves through Nature, leaves trails of green in His wake. At this time the Goddess and God are aware of one another and Their ability to procreate through union, an awareness that culminates in consummation at Beltane. Now is a time to tend your garden, to nurture the seedlings that germinated from the seeds you planted – both spiritually and physically.

Beltane (+/- 30 April)

The God has reached Manhood. The God and the Goddess fall in love and consummate their Union. The Goddess becomes pregnant of the God. During Beltane, Witches/Wiccans will celebrate by dancing around a Maypole during festivities. The pole is symbolic of the God (phallic symbol), whilst the greenery and ribbons are symbolic of the Goddess. During Beltane, Witches/Wiccans celebrate the fertility of Nature.

Litha (+/- 21 June)

Litha marks the Summer Solstice. It is the longest day and the shortest night of the year. The Goddess and God now rule the earth in union. The Goddess is pregnant, signifying the abundance and plenty now on earth. The Sabbat also indicates the turning point of the year. Until Yule, the light will gradually fade, giving in to darkness. Litha is not a time for reflection though. For Witches/Wiccans it is time to celebrate and make merry as though there is no tomorrow.

Lughnasadh (1 August)

Lughnasadh marks the first harvest. Now is the time when the plants and trees drop their seed both to ensure future crops and to provide us with food for the rest of the summer and perhaps even the winter months to come. The God's power is waning and the Goddess realizes that He is approaching death. Yet inside Her, she carries His seed thus ensuring that He will live on. For Witches/Wiccans it is a time to remember the bounty of the earth and understand that the Universe is constantly changing, always in flux.

Mabon (+/- 21 September)

Mabon is the second harvest and marks the Fall Equinox. As at Ostara, the day and the night are of equal length. The God is busy dying. The earth is withdrawing its bounty as each day passes, preparing for rest. For Witches/Wiccans, Mabon is a time of preparation. It is a time of taking stock and a time to find some balance again.





Samhain (31 October)

The Witches/Wiccans bid the God farewell as He dies and enters the Underworld. Their farewell is however only temporary as He is awaiting rebirth to the Goddess again at Yule. At Samhain, the veil between the realms of Life and Death is at its thinnest. In celebrating Samhain, Witches/Wiccans celebrate those loved ones that have crossed over to the Realm of Death. It is a time, when Witches reflect on the year gone by and come to terms with the one constant in Life, namely Death.

True Wiccans/Witches honor the eight Sabbats as these are days of both real and symbolic power. Celebrating the Sabbats is an important aspect and an integral part of the Wiccan/Witch's way.

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