

PEACE, LOVE AND HAPPY SOLSTICE: TITANIA

Solstice is an ancient Celtic celebration.

Winter Solstice {Yule,} celebrated in the Northern Hemisphere on 21 December and on 21 June in the Southern, the seasons being reversed. {The Australian convicts and soldiers got Summer clothes on 1 December, donning Autumn/Fall apparel 1 March, Winter attire on 1 June, Spring garb on 1 September, feeling like the seasons change then.} 'Christmas in July' originates from Yule in June. Summer Solstice, {Litha,} celebrated by our Northern brethren on June 21; on December 21 here.

Yule is a harbinger for going within and contemplating. Nature withdraws; deciduous trees lose leaves, returning each Spring. This winter, I happened upon a beautiful barren oak, springing back to life come September. Litha heralds bringing your gifts forth to the world; nature blossoms once more.

The ancient Greek tale of the seasons, tells of the willing descent of the maiden Kore to the Underworld. {Kore – pronounced kaw-ray, means 'maiden,} No, Hades never kidnapped nor accosted her in the older matriarchal telling. {A fact many storytellers get wrong; drives me nuts!} They both knew full, knowing the other knew that the six pomegranate seeds were a marriage proposal. Kore chose her name, 'Persephone,' meaning 'awe inspiring.' {Etymology - the meanings and origins of phrases, words and names fascinates me.} Persephone chose her own destiny, knowing she had to be a Goddess of both worlds for balance. {Pomegranates originated in Persia -modern day Iran; the fruit of fertility and wisdom. First introduced to them at 11 in 1981 on a historical tour, I always loved them. The seeds resemble beautiful crystals. I developed a keen interest in mythology in 1997; one of my many passions.}

Upon Solstice, I create vegetarian, dairy and gluten-free dishes, non-alcoholic chai-spiced pomegranate mead and honeyed elderflower elixir, inspired by Tolkien's regal Elves.

In our gift-giving basket go special presents we once loved, something lovingly made, services given with love; massages, energy healings, astrological readings... Passed on with love and friendship. A story is told about the gift. No thoughtless shop-bought presents like boxes of chocolates! We also meditate and contemplate.

Traditionally, presents or gifts of time were given with love. Solstice {and Samhain-Halloween;} sacred, not commercial. Felling trees would have horrified the ancients, decorating them, still grounded, with fruits, pine cones, home-made ornaments, flower chains...

Solstice celebrates the changing of the seasons, in peace with Mother Nature {Gaia.}