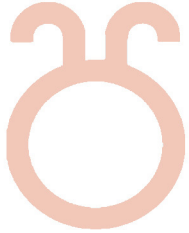




MARCH 21  
spring equinox



**ALTAR DECORATIONS**  
eggs, bunnies, baskets,  
chicks, budding twigs,  
a cauldron of Spring  
Water, spring flowers,  
four-leaf clovers, sprout-  
ing bulbs

**COLORS**  
light greens, yellows,  
blues and pinks

**HERBS AND FLOWERS**  
clover, violet, lilac, lily,  
tansy, peony, narcissus,  
jonquil, mint Irish moss,  
lemongrass, crocus

**TREES**  
elder, willow

**INCENSE AND OILS**  
cedarwood, patchouli,  
sandalwood, jasmine,  
geranium, helichrysum  
lime, vetiver, lemon-  
grass, wild orange, tan-  
gerine, Yang-Ylang

**CRYSTALS AND STONES**  
bloodstone, aquamarine,  
clear quartz, agate

**ANIMALS**  
rabbit, hare, lamb,  
robin, chick

**SPELLWORK**  
improving communica-  
tion, new beginnings,  
fertility, abundance,

# Ostara

A celebration of renewal and duality

Ostara is a pagan celebration of the German goddess Eostre and the origins of the Christian celebration of Easter. Eostre/ Ostara is depicted as a fertility goddess and a goddess of Spring, dawn and light.

Modern pagans have generally accepted the spelling Ostara, which honors this goddess as the word for the Vernal Equinox. Ostara is celebrated on the spring equinox, when day and night are equal.

## *Blossom by blossom the Spring begins*

The year is now waxing The Sun becomes stronger and the days are becoming longer and warmer. The earth reawakens to a new season of life-giving gifts. Ostara brings the energy of light, hope, fertility, growth, and new beginnings. This is the perfect time to plant seeds for the future and to celebrate the balance of all things: male and female, physical and spiritual, life and death, thought and action. Ostara is a great time to freshen up your home and life.



*Here comes Peter Cottontail,  
hopping down the bunny trail.  
Hippy, hoppity, Eostre's on its way!*

Hare is a symbol of immortality. It is also a major symbol for fertility and abundance as the hare can conceive while pregnant. Over the centuries the symbol of the Hare at Ostara has become the Easter Bunny.

According to a popular myth, Ostara was capable of turning into a rabbit herself. Because rabbits are nocturnal, they are connected to the moon, and thus so is the goddess of spring and fertility.



## *The Clover*

The clover is associated with Ostara because it is the green of new life. The three-leafed variety was sacred to the Triple Goddess.

The four-leafed clovers are considered lucky as they represent the four elements and also a symbol of the sun wheel.

## *The Hot Cross Bun*



The hot cross bun has roots with the Celts and is an offering to Eostre. They were adopted by Christians. The cross represents the four seasons and the phases of the moon.



## *The Egg*

Eggs are a symbol of fertility and new life which were decorated to honor the Goddess. They also represent abundance, and the sun.

## *Make a wish*

While dyeing the eggs, women and children would think carefully on their hopes and wishes for the coming year. They would then bury the eggs alongside a seedling in the ground to sustain and feed the plant through its growing season. As the plant grew, the hope or wish would also take root and come to fruition at the end of the year.



# Ostara Solitary Ritual

## The Spiral Journey

*Whether we're dancing with friends or journeying on our own, we can all benefit from the direct symbolism of the spiral: right in, and right back out. Nothing says rebirth any more clearly. In the Spiral Journey described below, you're not exploring your own individuality as you do in a labyrinth; you're connecting directly with the universal journey through life, into death, and back through rebirth.*

### *Supplies:*

- altar
- bowl of salt
- bowl of honey
- long burning incense
- Cakes and ale
- seasonal flowers

*If you have a round altar, place it at the center of the space you'll be using. If you don't have a round altar, set a plate, a rug, or anything else round at the center. On it, set a bowl of salt, a bowl of honey, and some long-burning incense. At or near the point where you'll be starting and ending your journey—and this should be at the Northeast—set up another table to hold "Cakes and Ale." Decorate this table with lots of Spring flowers. Using silk ones is alright, but it's even nicer if you can manage a few fresh, fragrant ones too.*

*You don't have to cast a Circle unless you want to, but it's a good idea to call the Directions, just to keep yourself oriented as you circle inward and out again. Calls like these will work well if you have none of your own you want to use.*

*"Hail, East, where breaks the dawn, where dawns the day of journeying."*

*"Hail, South, where bright is noon, where midday balances midnight."*

*"Hail, West, where sets the sun, where dies the day, trails vanishing."*

*"Hail, North, where shines the rune, where rebirth is my soul's birthright."*

*Most Spiral Journeys I've been part of begin to the dancer's or walker's left, which makes you go deosil to the center. This is appropriate: Mortal life does indeed follow the sun to its end. When we are reborn, we are coming away from death, not banishing death, but shedding death, leaving it behind—as a newborn baby doesn't banish the womb, but sheds its amniotic skin, or as a young adult doesn't banish the family home, but leaves it behind when she or he moves to a new apartment.*

*However, doing it the other way around (so to speak) may make sense to you: You are shedding this life as you return to the womb of the mother at the center of the spiral, and taking on a new life when you walk back to the outer edge. This ritual will have more meaning for you if you think about the significance of the direction you'll walk, and make your own decision. Think about it ahead of time, though, so that you're sure of yourself when you start out!*

*You should walk your Spiral Journey slowly, and you should circle the center at least four times (once for each season). Instead of thinking about the details of your life that make you unique, think about all of your connections to life, the universe, and everything as you walk. Hum if you like, or beat a drum in a heartbeat rhythm, or, before you start, put music on, very softly, in the background. (You should not be "grooving to the beat" of the music while you walk, you should be grooving to the beat of life's cycles.)*

*When you reach the center, do not stop. Walk around the center at least three times, once tasting salt (the bitterness of death), then wafting the incense around you, and finally, before you start back into the world again, tasting honey (the sweetness of rebirth). There's really nothing you need to say. You're*

*at the center. You're in the womb of the Goddess, where you experience death and life as the continuum they make. Their symbols, salt and honey, are on the same "altar" before you, and you partake of both, metaphorically in the same breath (of incense). Words are unnecessary. Being is enough.*

*Now, just as slowly as you walked in, turn around and walk out again, following the same spiral path. Again, go around at least four times before you emerge from the spiral path. Again, think not about your personal rebirth—there's time to contemplate that later—but about life's rebirth. The Sun was "reborn" at Yule, the God began to leaf out again at Imbolc, and now, at Ostara, the complex cycle of rebirth is complete as the animal kingdom adds its experience to the rest. Think about this "grand scheme of things," and how wonderful it is to be part of it.*

*When you reach your starting point, take a moment to appreciate that your original starting point has become the "end" of your journey, while just a few minutes ago, what seemed at first to be the "end" of your journey became your starting point. That's how it works, every time, and it just worked that way for you, right there in your own living room or basement or backyard.*

*Now, consecrate your Cakes and Ale, and have something to eat and drink. You may need to ground, and Cakes and Ale will help. Eating and drinking also reorients you: You're back in the phase of life's cycle where you do need to eat and drink, and at the time of year when your physical powers are growing, waxing like the Sun's powers.*

*Remember to share some of your feast with the Gods, whether you have invoked Them or not. When you're finished—and take a few minutes, if you need to—you can acknowledge the Directions again. It's always best to speak from your heart or to prepare your own calls and dismissals, but it's alright to borrow those you read and like, too.*

*"Hail, East, the rising sun, the sun that lit my journeying."*

*"Hail, South, where strength was bright, where noon was balance for the night."*

*"Hail, West, where set the Sun, where rested life, replenishing."*

*"Hail, North, where shone the rune, where rebirth was my soul's birthright."*

*This done, take one of the fresh flowers from your "altar" and put it with the portion of Cakes and Ale you've offered to the Goddess and God. Take another one and pin it in your hair, or tuck it in your shirt pocket or a buttonhole, and wear it for at least an hour. If you can, go outside and enjoy the day now; if it's too late for that, get up early and spend some time outside tomorrow morning.*

*Tomorrow morning would be a good time to take the Ostara Vow, too.*

### *The Ostara Vow*

*"The Wheel turns on; 'tis Ostaratide:  
Dusk and dawn abreast now ride.  
Bright and dark, quiet and clamor;  
tinder and spark, reserve and enamor.  
This balance I vow to make my own;  
poise will allow my pow'r to be known.  
From balance, the Wheel now turns toward light.  
With grace and steel, I affirm the same right."*



# The Ascent

## Working with the Light Half of the Year



*Every Part of me deserves  
to be seen*

### Affirmations

- \* I am grateful for this moment and everything I have
- \* I am worthy of new growth
- \* I take pleasure in this wonderful day
- \* I nourish my body with fresh food and movement
- \* My body is worthy of love and respect
- \* I am connected to the Earth
- \* I am happy to be me

The Earth stirs, awakening from its annual slumber. Green shoots emerge from dark soil like the grasping fingers of the Goddess searching for light. As the day light hours grow longer we may feel recharged by the cheery, hopeful energy of spring. The ascent of Persephone returns fertility to the land, creating an opportunity for the seeds of our intentions to take root and flourish. We have spent the winter of our soul tending to our own healing, planning for the future. However, healing is a journey that can take a lifetime to complete, so we must seize our days in the sun when they are offered to us. The time for introspection will come around again, but when energy is high and vibrant we should make room for joy and creativity.

### Abundance Spells

Perform flower magick to invite abundance, good fortune and pleasure into your life. Make floral baths, floor washes or dress your altar in flowers that attract the energy you wish to manifest. Wear flowers in your hair as a form of glamour magick; use this time to work with the prosperous, fertility of the season.

### Grounding in Nature

When the weather is mild, it is easier to spend more time outside. Walk barefoot on the earth, dance in streams and run your hands over the bark of a tree. Let yourself be intoxicated by the sweet floral aromas of Spring as you drink in the earth's bounty. Strengthen your connection with the natural world simply by being in it and enjoying it.

### Move Your Body

Awaken your body to spring by practising gentle exercise. Tune in to your body's needs, stretching out stiff muscles and bringing attention to painful areas. Raising your heartbeat will release endorphins that make you feel upbeat and positive.

### Celebrate Life

Engage in an activity that brings you pleasure, for no motive other than pure, unadulterated enjoyment. Be present in your life, savouring the little moments of magick that you encounter each day. The first sip of a hot coffee, the beaming smile of someone you love or the beauty of nature. Marvel in the wonder that is all around you and practice gratitude for the gift of life.

### Tea Potions

Steep seasonal flowers in boiling water to make a tea, or tisane as the herbal preparations are known. Infuse flowery Chamomile tea with honey to create sunshine in a cup. Making your tea with intention is a simple ritual that helps you to focus your energy and tune in to the season. Remember, energy flows where attention goes.

\* \* \* \* \*



*Persephone was once worshipped alongside her mother Demeter by the ancient Greeks in a cult known as the Eleusinian Mysteries.*

This cult was shrouded in secrecy; we can draw a few educated conclusions about what transpired during the mysteries, but the truth is buried along with its believers. We do know that the cult of these agricultural Goddesses promised a happy afterlife, with the ascent of Persephone symbolic of eternal rebirth. Entry was open to anyone who was free from the sin of murder, and who spoke the Greek language. To become initiated, one first had to participate in the Lesser Mysteries. This involved sacrificing a pig, then purifying oneself by bathing in sacred waters. Full initiation would then be completed at the Greater Mysteries later in the year. It is speculated that hallucinogenic fungi was consumed whilst a re-enactment of Demeter's search for Persephone took place. The ceremony concluded, it is theorised, with the ritualistic cutting of an ear of corn.

*We may never know the secrets of the Eleusinian Mysteries, it is arcane knowledge that has been lost to time. However, if you work with Persephone then you may wish to dedicate yourself to her in a personal ceremony. Such a ritual may help to strengthen the connection that you feel to the Goddess.*

This dedication has been divided into two parts that can be performed over the course of a lunar cycle; this is to represent descent and ascent as key aspects of working with Persephone. Before you begin this dedication you may like to journal about what it means to you to be a follower of Persephone. What morals do you hold, what can you learn from the Goddess and how will you walk a path that honours her energy?

**Descent**

**Requirements:**

- Black Candle
- Lighter
- A meaningful item to sacrifice
- Bowl of salt water

At the dark moon or end of the waning moon cycle, begin the ceremony by lighting the black candle. Gaze into the flame, then when you are ready speak the following:

*Goddess of Spring, I descend with  
you into the darkness,  
I surrender to the cycles of the  
earth,  
Of stillness and movement,  
I sacrifice this item of meaning to  
symbolise your loss of innocence,  
I embrace the shadow for without it  
there can be no balance,  
Persephone, accept my dedication  
as your faithful conduit,  
To shine light wherever it is needed.*

Submerge your hands in the bowl of water as an act of purification; anoint your third eye space on the centre of your forehead with a little bit of the water.

When the candle has burned down the first part of the dedication ceremony is complete. The item that you are sacrificing must be discarded; if it is something that can benefit others then give it away to charity rather than throwing it away.

**Ascent**

**Requirements:**

- White candle
- Lighter
- Red wine or juice

At the full moon, begin the second half of the ceremony by lighting the white candle. Gaze into the flame, then when you are ready speak the following:

*Queen of the Underworld, rise up  
and return,  
Cross the threshold of darkness,  
Bursting forth to bring new life in  
your wake,  
I rejoice in your homecoming,  
Rolling with the ebb and flow of  
your rhythm,  
I raise this glass to you and drink  
in dedication of my devotion to  
you.*

Take a sip of the wine or juice that you have prepared; this seals your dedication to the Goddess Persephone.

As the candle burns out, spend some time in silent reflection, thinking about what it means to you to be a conduit for Persephone's divine energy.

# Shadow Work

## Preparation

The myth of Persephone resonates with people on many levels; its themes of over-protection, trauma and consent are aspects that we may all encounter at some point in our lives. There are variations on the myth because folkloric stories can evolve with the audience, but these variations often contain threads of the same elements. The central theme is that the maiden Goddess Persephone had no autonomy; decisions were made without her consent which led her to lose control of her path. Depending on the version that you relate to the most, either Persephone's mother Demeter decided to shield her daughter from romantic relationships, her father Zeus consented to a marriage without consulting her, or Hades abducted her. Either way, Persephone ended up in the Underworld, a place utterly foreign from the life she knew.

Did she eat the pomegranate seeds as a way to take control of her destiny as a Goddess that inhabits both life and death or was she tricked? Did she choose to reign as a stern but benevolent Queen to lost souls, or is she a reluctant ruler? These questions have no concrete answer, but the parts of her story that illicit an emotional response from you are the parts that you ought to pay attention to. There is a reason you are drawn to Persephone's story, and it may speak to a specific wound within your psyche. Perhaps you feel constantly conflicted, caught in the middle of an impossible situation and unable to see a compromise. It may be that you are trying to please too many people and never stop to think about your own needs. It could be that you feel mistreated by other, more dominant people.

Work through the Shadow prompts that are inspired by Persephone's myths to help you understand and integrate the parts of you that are calling out for healing.

## The Journaling Process:

1. Free form answer to the question, let your thoughts pour out exactly as they come.
2. Read what you have written and challenge it. Imagine the situation from the perspective of the other party. Could there be an alternate interpretation of events?
3. Identify what your answers can teach you. Have you learnt a lesson already, can you see an area that you wish to work on?
4. Re-imagine how negative aspects can be possible strengths if they are harnessed in an appropriate way. For example, people pleasing shows a compassionate nature as long as your personal boundaries are not violated.
5. Write yourself an intention that summarises your positive actions moving forward.



*Illuminate the inner  
darkness of your psyche*

## Tips

- Only approach shadow work when you are in a calm, centred state of mind.
- Choose a time when you won't be disturbed.
- If you don't like to write, you may consider typing your thoughts or dictating them into a recording device.
- Set your space with candles, incense and soothing music to mark this time as separate from mundane activities.
- Always be kind to yourself. If it gets too much then stop.



# Journal Prompts

*Where in your life do you feel out of control?  
Recall a time that you willingly allowed another to  
make decisions for you.*

*Which areas of your life do you feel deprived of your  
personal power?*

*What do you feel conflicted about?*

*What do you think would happen if you made a  
decision that others disagreed with?*

*How do you deal with conflict?*

*When have you felt denied of your independence?*

*When have you felt controlled or manipulated?*

*Who controls you now?*

*What do you feel obligated to do? Why?*

*When have you felt underestimated?*

*How do you feel about saying 'no' to others?*

*How do you feel about asserting your boundaries?*

*Which areas of your life lack growth or progression?*

*Recall a time where trying to please others impacted  
your personal happiness.*

*Why is pleasing other people important to you?*

*Is it important for you to be liked by others?*

*When have you felt taken advantage of?*

*What traumatic memories do you remain haunted by?*

*Which areas of your life feel out of balance?*

*What would you do if you weren't afraid of what  
others thought?*

*What would 'being in control of your life' look like  
to you?*

*What stands in the way of you being in control of  
your life?*

*What would happen if you walked away from conflict?*

*What do you desire most from life?*

*Who or what separates you from your desires?*



# Shadow Worksheet

The Shadow Trait:

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Ways in which it manifests:

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A past event that helped form the shadow:

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If you could offer words of comfort to the past self from that memory, what would you say?

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How could the shadow trait be used positively?

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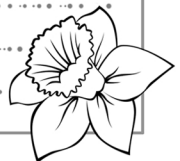
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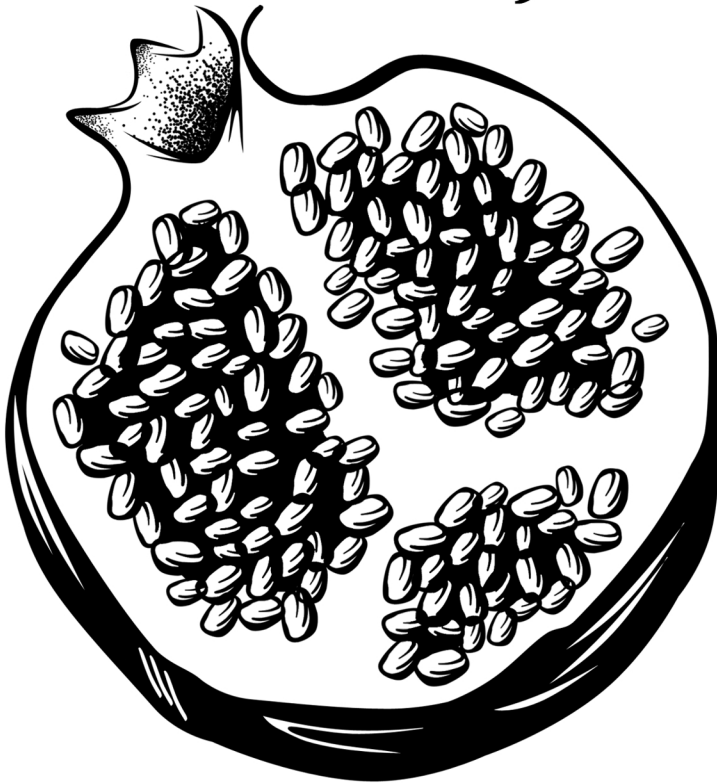
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# Pomegranate

## Abundance Spell



### Materials:

Pomegranate with an intact 'crown'  
Red Candle  
Knife or sharp implement to carve with  
Lighter  
Heatproof plate  
Bowl

*This spell is designed to draw in fertility and prosperity; the many seeds of the Pomegranate make it an abundantly wealthy fruit, full of ruby seeded jewels. The fruit is sacred to Persephone, therefore you may wish to call upon her when working this spell.*

1. Carve a sigil, word or symbol onto the skin of a Pomegranate that represents the abundance you desire. For example, a dollar sign for money, a heart for love, or a crown for success in a project.

2. Place the fruit on a plate, alongside a red candle. Light the candle, and say the following invocation:

*Persephone, mistress of the sacred fruit,  
Bless this Pomegranate, the symbol of my desire,  
With every seed consumed, I bind myself to my  
ambition,  
With every seed swallowed, I honour your greatness,  
Persephone, nourish the seeds I plant within myself,  
Let all that I yearn for flourish in my life,  
So mote it be.*

3. Let the candle burn down; when it is complete, carefully cut the 'crown' from the top of the pomegranate, putting it to one side. Remove the seeds from the Pomegranate, placing them in the bowl.

4. Eat six of the seeds, focusing on that which you intend to manifest. Visualise the consumption of each seed as a sacred contract between yourself and the divine, that will bring your dreams into fruition.

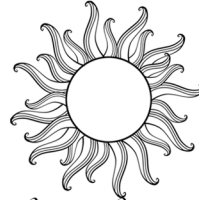
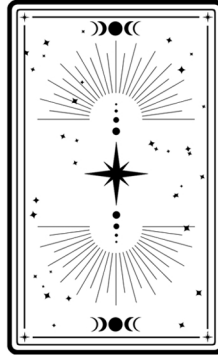
5. Place six of the seeds on your altar or in a safe space, as an offering and a visual reminder of the spell.

6. You may either continue to eat the rest of the seeds immediately, or eat them over the course of a few days. Each time you eat them, continue to pour intent into the magick you are conjuring. Do not allow anyone other than yourself to eat the seeds.

7. Take the crown of the pomegranate that was placed to one side, and carry it about in your purse or wallet as an amulet of the spell.

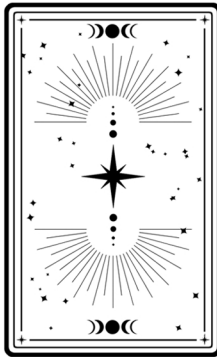
8. When the spell is complete, and you have achieved what you set out for, discard the offering of the six seeds and the Pomegranate crown either by burying them, or allowing them to decompose in an outside space.

# Persephone's Tarot Spread



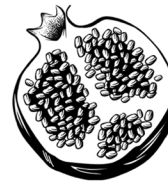
*Above the Surface:*

**~The Conscious Influences~**  
Your current position and mindset at present. The dreams and ideas that occupy your waking thoughts.



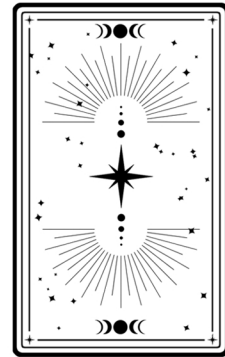
*The Narcissus:*

**~What Grabs Your Attention~**  
Things that distract you, obstacles that deflect your attention away from your plans and aspirations.



*The Pomegranate:*

**~The Action Needed~**  
Where should you commit your time and focus your attention? The advice to follow in order to pursue your best interests.



*Below the Surface:*

**~The Subconscious Influences~**  
Your unconscious thoughts and feelings that are subtly influencing you without you being aware.

