



## December Newsletter

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### **Important December Dates**

(All times are CST)

#### **December 5, 11:36 am - New Moon**

The New Moon in Sagittarius on December 5, 2010 promises a good dose of jovial if somewhat boisterous energy.

It seems like forever since we have had a lunation we could relax and celebrate instead of bracing ourselves for another hard lesson needing our attention. It has been awhile since the fire signs (Aries, Leo and Sagittarius) have gotten much support from the heavens too. Sagittarius does know how to laugh and have a good time with his fiery mates.

Saturn in Libra will help harness the drive of this New Moon and direct its exuberance into more productive channels. I really like this New Moon for setting goals and choosing your direction over the coming months because of the sextile from Saturn. In this case, Saturn offers guidance without deflating enthusiasm and spontaneity, critical for supporting the creative process.

Mars is still in Sagittarius and with the square to Jupiter (Sagittarius's ruler) and Uranus in Pisces; he is keeping the volume turned up high. This is a very feisty Mars, ready for adventure and looking for a good adrenaline rush. The sextile from Neptune and Chiron in Aquarius probably won't slow him down much either and if you do set out to do some serious partying, please make

sure you have a designated driver. If you are feeling like this high energy is too much of a good thing, then know it's already fading because Mars will be moving into Capricorn two days after the New Moon on December 7.

There is a solid conjunction of Mercury, Pluto and the North Node in Capricorn ready to teach us about priorities when it comes to organizing our thoughts and where we wish to place our focus in the month ahead. This is a very powerful combination and those who have planets and Angles (Ascendant, Descendant, Midheaven and Imum Coli) from two to five degrees in the cardinal signs (Aries, Cancer, Libra and Capricorn) will definitely know it. Venus in Scorpio makes a waxing sextile to this stellium, and if you need to make decisions concerning your finances this is a good time to do so. Scorpio and Capricorn are both associated with investments and have the good sense of timing needed to make wise ones.

The Sabian symbol for 14 Sagittarius is "The great pyramid and the sphinx" with a keynote: *The enduring power of occult knowledge and of its quasi-divine Custodians, "Seed-men" of a previous cycle of existence.* This speaks of drawing on the myths and legends from the past for inspiration in our current lives and times while retaining the realization we too have much to offer.

Overall this is a very good New Moon for positioning ourselves to take advantage of the beginning of the lunar cycle. All the pieces are in place to do so. We have a great combination to draw on: The bright, vital enthusiasm of a Sagittarius New Moon, a very well-grounded Mercury-Pluto combo for planning and the energy generating dynamo of Mars in Sagittarius drawing on both the Jupiter-Uranus conjunction and Neptune in Aquarius. Go for it!!

### **December 10, 6:04 am to December 30, 1:21 am – Mercury Retrograde**

Those who celebrate the Islamic and Jewish holidays will find that this year, their major holidays will be over before Mercury's retrograde begins. But, those who will be celebrating their holidays closer to the Winter Solstice had better get their holiday shopping done early. (Like in November!)

Planets don't actually switch directions in their orbits. They just appear that way when they are passing the Earth or we're passing them. When a planet is in retrograde, it is usually closer to the Earth in its orbit and exerts more gravitational force in our direction.

Well, little Mercury is passing between us and the Sun once again. Because his orbit is so fast, he does it 3 or 4 times a year. Typically when Mercury is in retrograde, issues from the past resurface. Past relationships are more likely to reunite during Mercury's retrograde. Also, it's easier to connect with the other side, and we may receive messages from past loved ones in ways that are not always so subtle. It's not a good time to sign contracts or start something new, like a new job. Often things initiated during a Mercury's retrograde will fizzle out.

This Mercury's retrograde is going to be most difficult when Mercury is at his retrograde station and a few days before and after. When a planet is at retrograde station, it is at the point where it is changing from a forward to a backward motion. Mercury will cross Pluto, the planet of death and rebirth, on the New Moon, December 5th. There could be jealousy, arguments, transportation

problems, and especially computer problems beginning then. Then, from the last day of Hanukkah, December 9th, through December 14th, Mercury, Pluto, and Mars will all move to an exact conjunction! Mercury rules communication, transportation, and short trips. Pluto governs passion, criminal behavior, and transformation. Then add Mars, the warrior, who represents sex, energy, and fights! There will be all kinds of mishaps, misfortunes, and misunderstandings, especially on Monday December 13th.

Once Mercury, Pluto, and Mars begin to separate, and Mercury gets moving along his backward path (around December 15th), we should see the typical Mercury retrograde behavior. An old friend may call, or we may find ourselves digging out old boxes of stuff and sorting through them. Leave extra time for travel, and make sure important files on the computer are backed up.

There could be a second Mercury retrograde flare-up around December 20th and 21st. Mercury will be at negative aspects to Uranus and Jupiter while we have a Full Moon lunar eclipse. There could be a lot of misunderstandings and just plain selfish decisions in the air, and the eclipse will be amplifying them.

Mercury will turn direct on December 30th (29th in some areas), and luckily, we should find this transition almost uneventful.

Mercury's retrograde path will begin at 5 degrees 56 minutes Capricorn, and will end at 19 degrees 39 minutes Sagittarius. If you have any inner planets (Sun through Mars) or any power points on your natal chart in Mercury's path, you may want to consult an astrologer for more information.

### **December 21, 2:13 am - Full Moon**

#### Long Nights Moon

To the Cherokee, December is the Snow Moon. In southern regions, the rare snowfall most often occurs during this time of year. The Choctaw refer to this as the Peach Moon. To the Dakota Sioux, it is simply the Twelfth Moon.

December marks the onset of winter. The world turns dark and cold. Plants have gone dormant; trees stand bare of leaves. Many animals hibernate; others have migrated to distant regions. Game is difficult to find and hunters may spend long cold hours in the woods with no reward. Fresh food becomes difficult to find in the wild. Yet winter has its own austere beauty in the cold blue shadows and pristine snowdrifts, the glint of icicles, and the delicate feathers of frost.

Rituals in December take an introspective turn. Meditate on what you have done the previous year. Honor death and dormancy as natural parts of the cycle along with life and growth. Admire the splendor of sunlight on the snow and ice. Magickally, work spells to "freeze" bad habits and make them go dormant. If you're hanging birdfeeders and putting out water, add a charm to show the birds where these resources are.

~ Elizabeth Barrette in [Llewellyn's 2010 Witches' Datebook](#)

## **December 21, 2:17 am - Lunar Eclipse**

The full moon lunar eclipse of December 21, 2010 highlights the Gemini/Sagittarius polarity, which brings in the themes of communication, education, higher thought, intelligence and the more negative energies of fanaticism, arrogance, overindulgence, rationalization, duplicity and amorality.

Because the Moon and the Sun are both at the all-important 29 degrees of their respective signs (Moon 29, Gemini 20 and Sun 29, Sagittarius 20) an urgent message of change is part of the mix. Any planet or light at 29 degrees of a sign brings endings and change. Something has matured and is no longer needed. It is time to transform something or to end it and to build something new. However, it is wise to be aware that a planet at 29 degrees can cause a person to waiver, to go back and forth and to evaluate and re-evaluate endlessly, until finally, exhausted with the decision making process, that person may just make a rash and hasty decision to change things without using rational thought.

Then too, all eclipses bring in a time of change, a time to correct our course and move forward in a new or altered way toward our goals. This lunar eclipse asks us to take a long, hard look at the issues in our life that are holding us back or that are keeping us from fulfilling our destiny and to make decisions about a more positive, life-affirming way of meeting those challenges.

This particular lunar eclipse becomes even more powerful because of its location near the galactic center at 26 degrees Sagittarius. (See my previous article on Pluto when it was located at the Galactic center before entering Capricorn.) The lunar eclipse location near the powerful Galactic center magnifies and adds power and focus to the energies already being manifested.

It is also noteworthy that the eclipse opposition of the Moon and Sun are square the conjunction of Jupiter and Uranus in Pisces. Because Jupiter is the ruler of Sagittarius, the sign that holds the Sun during this eclipse, the themes of compassion (Pisces) and truth (Jupiter) are very much in focus. Uranus brings unexpected change like a lightning bolt and new ways of thinking and acting.

In short, this lunar eclipse brings an unprecedented opportunity to bring about a new way of being with regard to others with whom we share Mother Earth. We are called to act in a higher, more authentic way (Jupiter) and to keep our mind on the oneness of all beings (Pisces). Indeed, in light of the world situation at this time, this lunar eclipse presents an opportune time for each of us to focus on this spirit of oneness with all others.

Many blessings to each of you who read this and take up the challenge of this eclipse—to give away those things that are no longer needed or helpful, and to bring to the world a spirit of loving, truthful compassion for all beings.

## **December 21, 5:38 pm – Yule/Winter Solstice**

### **Yule**

**Animals/Mythical Creatures** – Yule goat (Nordic), reindeer stag, squirrels, Yule cat, Sacred

White Buffalo, Kallikantzaroi-ugly chaos monsters (Greek), trolls, phoenix, Yule elf, jule gnome, squirrels, wren/robin

**Gemstones** – cat's eye, ruby, diamond, garnet, bloodstone

**Incense/Oils** – bayberry, cedar, ginger, cinnamon, pine, rosemary, frankincense, myrrh, nutmeg, wintergreen, saffron

**Colors/Candles** – gold, silver, red, green, white

**Tools/Symbols/Decorations** – bayberry candles, evergreens, holly, mistletoe, poinsettia, lights, gifts, Yule log, Yule tree, spinning wheels, wreaths, bells, mother & child images

**Goddesses** – Great Mother, Befana (Strega), Holda (Teutonic), Isis (Egyptian), Triple Goddess, Mary (Christian), Tonazin (Mexican), Lucina (Roman), St. Lucy (Swedish), Bona Dea (Roman), Mother Earth, Eve (Hebrew), Ops (Roman Holy Mother), the Snow Queen, Hertha (German), Frey (Norse)

**Gods** – Sun Child, Saturn (Roman), Cronos (Greek), Horus/Ra (Egyptian), Jesus (Christian-Gnostic), Mithras (Persian), Balder (Norse), Santa Claus/Odin (Teutonic), Holly King, Sol Invicta, Janus (God of Beginnings), Marduk (Babylonian) Old Man Winter

**Essence** – honor, rebirth, transformation, light out of darkness, creative inspiration, the mysteries, new life, regeneration, inner renewal, reflection/introspection

**Dynamics/Meaning** – death of the Holly (winter) King; reign of the Oak (summer) King, begin the ordeal of the Green Man, death & rebirth of the Sun God; night of greatest lunar imbalance; sun's rebirth; shortest day of year

**Purpose** – honor the Triple Goddess, welcome the Sun Child

**Rituals/Magick** – personal renewal, world peace, honoring family & friends, Festival of light, meditation

**Customs** – lights, gift-exchanging, singing, feasting, resolutions, new fires kindled, strengthening family & friend bonds, generosity, Yule log, hanging mistletoe, apple wassailing, burning candles, Yule tree decorating; kissing under mistletoe; needfire at dawn vigil; bell ringing/sleigh-bells; father Yule

**Foods** – nuts, apple, pear, caraway cakes soaked with cider, pork, orange, hibiscus or ginger tea, roasted turkey, nuts, fruitcake, dried fruit, cookies, eggnog, mulled wine

**Herbs** – blessed thistle, evergreen, moss, oak, sage, bay, bayberry, cedar, pine, frankincense, ginger, holly, ivy, juniper, mistletoe, myrrh, pinecones, rosemary, chamomile, cinnamon, valerian, yarrow

**Element/Gender** – earth/male

**Threshold** – dawn

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## **December 31 - New Year's Eve**

This year, try writing your New Year's resolutions in dragon's blood ink on a square piece of parchment paper. This ink is traditionally used for spells involving strength and power. Then, upon the paper sprinkle a bit of dried mugwort, and roll it into a tube and secure it in the center with a red ribbon. Anoint a new white candle with bergamot oil as you state your resolutions aloud. Light the candle and then use its flame to set fire to the rolled-up parchment. Cast the parchment into a

small cast iron cauldron (or other fireproof container) and recite three times the following incantation: "To the flames my words are spoken as the newborn year unfolds. Resolutions be not broken, promises be upheld."

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Deluxe Wicca Kit with Love Spell – Regular Price - \$78.99, Sale Price - \$75.99

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## Herb of the Month

**Pepper, Black** - Fire/Mars, Gender - Masculine Parts Used – Peppercorn, Magickal Properties - Banishing, Protection, Uses - Another wonderful and cupboard ready herb for banishing negativity. Burn to rid the home or office of bad vibrations or before you move into a new place (make sure you then use Sage), carry with you to ward off petty jealousy against you, aids in summoning up your courage to face things or do things you just don't want to but have to

To learn more about this and other herbs, get our Magickal Herbs eBook at

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## Stone of the Month

**Olivine** - Money, Protection, Love and Luck.

Associations: Chakra: Heart, Element: Earth, Flowers & Plants: Hyacinth, lilac and orchid, Herbs - Incenses - Oils: Lavender, olive, patchouli and pine, Planet: Venus, Zodiac: Taurus

Metaphysical Properties & Uses: Animals: Olivine will help relax a stressed pet, Children: Olivine will help children to become less anxious about their peers and help mend broken friendships,

Finance & Prosperity: Olivine is a luck and money charm, Health & Healing: Olivine is a general healer but will help relieve asthma, allergies, bites and stings, Home: Olivine will attract good fortune to your home and help bring a sense of peace, Love: Olivine is a fidelity, love and marriage charm, Protection: Olivine is anti-negativity, Psychic: It can be used for protection against negativity in general and for auras in particular, Ritual: Olivine should be used in prosperity rituals, Work: Olivine will help attract more business particularly if you work in the money market.

## Rune of the Month

⚡ **Othala** (O: Ancestral property.) – Inherited property or possessions, a house, a home. What is truly important to one. Group order, group prosperity. Land of birth, spiritual heritage, experience and fundamental values. Aid in spiritual and physical journeys. Source of safety, increase and abundance. Othala Reversed or Merkstave: Lack of customary order, totalitarianism, slavery, poverty, homelessness. Bad karma, prejudice, clannishness, provincialism. What a man is bound to.

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## Tarot Card of the Month

**The Tower** - The Tower tarot card sits at number 16.

Throughout our lives we all strive to obtain and retain a sense of self and individual identity. This starts at The Emperor and our feeling of I Am. We draw people, places and things to us that help us to maintain what we believe to be our identity. Piece by piece, brick by brick, we build this ego personality, which here in the Tower is represented by the Tower itself. Then, something happens that shatters our illusions and the Tower crumbles.

In The Tower card this sudden occurrence is symbolized by lightning striking as if God himself has metered out some divine intervention. The two figures being ejected from the Tower are symbolic of our dual nature. In life there are two distinct ways in which The Tower is experienced. One is when something unexpected happens to us and the other is when someone else deliberately undermines our personality and therefore damages and destroys our self-confidence.

With the first example we directly experience this as a deep shock and trauma. One man had the Tower as the initial central pivot point of his reading. From the spread it was obvious that he had experienced such trauma that he now didn't know who he was at all. Literally he had lost his identity. He explained that a few months ago his mother had died and that along with his three brothers, whom he was in business with, he had gone to the reading of the will. In her will, his mother had declared that he was not his father's child but the son of a family friend. This had instantly been a shock for the man, but when his three brothers turned and pointed at him saying, "You are not blood, we do not want you in the business," his world had completely fallen apart. In a matter of seconds he had lost his identity, his family and his work.

The following are a few examples of how the Tower may depict shock. Finding out that one's partner is having an affair. Sudden loss of a loved one. Accidents. Divorce. For many people, the breakup of a long term relationship results in The Tower. One's identity has been built on being that person's partner, on the shared friendships, the shared dreams and the shared income. With the loss of the relationship comes the loss of everything else.

Shock shuts down the heart chakra. This creates feelings of numbness and an inability to experience emotions. In tarot, the heart chakra is symbolized by the Ace of Cups. Often you will find the Ace of Cups reversed close to The Tower card in a reading symbolizing the broken heart. If the trauma is recent then this is a very natural reaction, but if the trauma is from years ago, then it symbolizes that the individual has not yet been through all of the stages of grief. Often crying is what is needed, and you will often find that a person stuck in shock has not yet cried, or cried enough, over their loss. This sensation of letting go is symbolized by the Star Card.

The other side of The Tower is when one person deliberately sets out to undermine another. The cause behind this is often jealousy or, if the two people are in a relationship, fear of abandonment. This fear is rooted in the unconscious idea that if the partner achieves more then they will no longer want to be with someone who is not so worthy. In a reading, see if this Nine of Coins reversed is close by as this often symbolizes a person who fears being abandoned and is highly insecure.

The Tower may appear in both work situations and teaching situations. In both cases it often occurs due to inherent jealousy. In a reading, the Three of Swords will depict the jealousy and bad feeling coming from the person who is undermining the individual. Sometimes it appears in readings for people who are studying on their spiritual path and it is their tutor, or master, who is undermining their abilities. These types of teachers fear that the student will surpass them and somehow steal their glory. This shows the spiritual student has great capability, otherwise the master would not fear them making progress. It also happens in educational establishments of all sorts, again where the teacher has to "know best." In this kind of situation, look out for the three of coins close by, as this symbolizes teachers and teaching.

When the Tower is taken to symbolize the past and childhood, it can depict either childhood abuse, generally of a mental of "smacking" type, rather than sexual, or birth trauma. With childhood abuse the Tower depicts blows to the body or ego identity, and only specific surrounding cards would indicate that the abuse had a sexual nature. These shocks get stored in the body, create post-traumatic stress and also long term feelings of inferiority. Shock from birth trauma can not only create feelings of inferiority but also contribute to a long term sense of loss, grief and a sense of "not belonging." Very often, such people find it difficult to find a sense of fulfillment within their lives and underestimate their own achievements.

When the Tower card is reversed in a reading it symbolizes the questioner's refusal to crack up under strain, pressure or shock. Very often, it depicts that someone has armor plated themselves in order to survive a situation. If shock remains locked in it results in all kinds of physical ailments, especially stiffness within the body. Often when a client has a variety of ailments which doctors have diagnosed as "stress" and the Tower card is reversed, then cards should be drawn for their past

to work out where the shock originated from. It is quite amazing how the human psyche manages to cleverly cloak and shield us from shock so that we can continue to function.

On a very mundane level if the questioner is asking about buying property and the Tower card turns up representing the property they intend to buy, then it literally indicates that the building is on shaky ground, that the foundations may be at fault or that it is in need of extreme renovation.

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## **Correspondence of the Month**

### **Seasons**

**Summer** – love, marriage, friendship, beauty, courage, fire magick, strength, protection, magickal and physical energy

**Spring** – healing, air magick, ecological rituals, fertility, finances

**Autumn** – money, employment, water magick

**Winter** – Earth magick, introspection, meditation, magickal exercises, banishing, seeking past lives

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## **Spell of the Month**

### **Fireplace Magick**

The fireplace has long been regarded as the magickal portal of a home. It was through this opening that Witches were said to fly away on their broomsticks, and in modern mythology it is the opening through which Santa Claus comes and goes. The fireplace once was the center of home life. In it food was cooked, clothes washed, and by its light, families gathered to visit and tell stories. Due to its vital importance, people developed ways to protect the fireplace, such as tossing a handful of oak leaves, cloves, holly, rosemary, frankincense, cinnamon, or nettles onto the already smoldering fire.

Setting a Witch's besom (broom) near the fireplace or crossing the andirons were also ways of blocking negativity from entering the house. Keeping a cauldron boiling on the hearth was another. Some fireplaces were decorated with three concentric circles above the opening. This probably harkens back to a very old belief that the Triple Goddess protected any home wherein a fire was kindled. The sun god Lugh could also be called upon to protect the hearth by hanging a pouch containing the first grain of the harvest on the mantle. This was also a charm for fertility.

Other herbs were often hung to dry near the hearth, the heat and dryness curing and preserving the plants until they were ready to be used. These herbs could be enchanted and hung up as an additional talisman of protection.

Scrying by hearth light is a relaxing pastime, and gazing softly into a roaring fire to catch glimpses of visions is an age-old practice. You can predict the future by the manner in which the coals, peat, or wood burns.

The fireplace can be as magickal as your imagination will allow. Here you are working directly with the transformative element of fire, and how you choose to utilize it is up to you and your inner self.

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