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**Aphrodite** ([Template:IPAc-en](/wiki/Template:IPAc-en) [Template:Respell](/wiki/Template:Respell); [Greek](/wiki/Greek_language): [Template:Lang](/wiki/Template:Lang)) is the [Greek](/wiki/Greek_mythology) [goddess](/wiki/Goddess) of [love](/wiki/Love), [beauty](/wiki/Beauty), pleasure, and procreation. Her [Roman equivalent](/wiki/Interpretatio_romana) is the goddess [Template:Lang](/wiki/Template:Lang).<ref name=Lar>*Larousse Desk Reference Encyclopedia*, [The Book People](/wiki/The_Book_People), Haydock, 1995, p. 215.</ref> She is identified with the planet [Venus](/wiki/Venus).

As with many ancient Greek deities, there is more than one story about her origins. According to [Hesiod's](/wiki/Hesiod) [*Theogony*](/wiki/Theogony), she was born when [Cronus](/wiki/Cronus) cut off [Uranus's](/wiki/Uranus_(mythology)) genitals and threw them into the sea, and she arose from the sea foam (*aphros*). According to [Homer's](/wiki/Homer) [*Iliad*](/wiki/Iliad), she is the daughter of [Zeus](/wiki/Zeus) and [Dione](/wiki/Dione_(Titaness/Oceanid)). According to [Plato](/wiki/Plato) (*Symposium*, 180e), these two origins were of entirely separate entities: [Aphrodite Ourania](/wiki/Aphrodite_Urania) and [Aphrodite Pandemos](/wiki/Aphrodite_Pandemos).

Because of her beauty, other gods feared that their rivalry over her would interrupt the peace among them and lead to war, so [Zeus](/wiki/Zeus) married her to [Hephaestus](/wiki/Hephaestus), who, because of his ugliness and deformity, was not seen as a threat. Aphrodite had many lovers—both gods, such as [Ares](/wiki/Ares), and men, such as [Anchises](/wiki/Anchises). She played a role in the [Eros and Psyche](/wiki/Eros_and_Psyche) legend, and later was both [Adonis's](/wiki/Adonis) lover and his surrogate mother. Many lesser beings were said to be children of Aphrodite.

Aphrodite is also known as **Cytherea** (*Lady of Cythera*) and **Cypris** (*Lady of Cyprus*) after the two cult sites, [Cythera](/wiki/Kythira) and [Cyprus](/wiki/Cyprus), which claimed to be her place of birth. [Myrtle](/wiki/Myrtle_(plant)), [doves](/wiki/Dove), [sparrows](/wiki/Sparrow), [horses](/wiki/Horse), and [swans](/wiki/Swan) were said to be sacred to her. The ancient Greeks identified her with the Ancient Egyptian goddess [Hathor](/wiki/Hathor).[[1]](#cite_note-1) Aphrodite had many other names, such as Acidalia, Cytherea, and Cerigo, each used by a different local cult of the goddess in Greece. The Greeks recognized all of these names as referring to the single goddess Aphrodite, despite the slight differences in what these local cults believed the goddess demanded of them. The Attic philosophers of the 4th century, however, drew a distinction between a celestial Aphrodite (Aphrodite Urania) of transcendent principles, and a separate, "common" Aphrodite who was the goddess of the people (Aphrodite Pandemos).

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## Etymology[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=1)]

[Hesiod](/wiki/Hesiod) derives *Aphrodite* from *aphrós* "sea-foam," interpreting the name as "risen from the foam".[[2]](#cite_note-2) Janda, accepting this as genuine, claims the foam birth myth as an [Indo-European](/wiki/Proto-Indo-European_mythology) mytheme.[[3]](#cite_note-3) The second part of the compound has been variously analyzed as \**odítē* "wanderer"[[4]](#cite_note-4)or \**dítē* "bright",[[5]](#cite_note-5)[[6]](#cite_note-6) the latter of which Janda agrees with and interprets the overall meaning as "she who shines from the foam (ocean)", supposing the name is a byname of [Eos](/wiki/Eos), the [dawn goddess](/wiki/Hausos).[[3]](#cite_note-3) Likewise, Witczak[[7]](#cite_note-7) proposes an Indo-European compound [*Template:PIE*](/wiki/Template:PIE) "very" and [*Template:PIE*](/wiki/Template:PIE) "to shine", also referring to Eos. However, etymologies based on comparison with Eos are unlikely since Aphrodite's attributes are entirely different from those of Eos (or the [Vedic deity](/wiki/Vedic_deity) [Ushas](/wiki/Ushas)).[[8]](#cite_note-8) Finally, the medieval [*Etymologicum Magnum*](/wiki/Etymologicum_Magnum) offers a highly contrived etymology, deriving *Aphrodite* from the compound *habrodíaitos* ([Template:Lang](/wiki/Template:Lang)), "she who lives delicately", from *habrós* and *díaita*. The alteration from *b* to *ph* is explained as a "familiar" characteristic of Greek "obvious from the [Macedonians](/wiki/Ancient_Macedonian_language)",[[9]](#cite_note-9) despite the fact that the name cannot be of Macedonian origin.

A number of improbable non-Greek etymologies have been suggested in scholarship. One Semitic etymology compares Aphrodite to the Assyrian *barīrītu*, the name of a female demon that appears in Middle Babylonian and Late Babylonian texts.[[10]](#cite_note-10) Hammarström[[11]](#cite_note-11) looks to [Etruscan](/wiki/Etruscan_language), comparing *(e)prϑni* "lord", an Etruscan honorific loaned into Greek as [πρύτανις](/wiki/Prytaneis). This would make the theonym in origin an honorific, "the lady". [Hjalmar Frisk](/wiki/Hjalmar_Frisk)[[12]](#cite_note-12) and [Robert Beekes](/wiki/Robert_S._P._Beekes)[[13]](#cite_note-13) reject this etymology as implausible, especially since Aphrodite actually appears in Etruscan in the borrowed form *Apru* (from Greek *Aphrō*, clipped form of *Aphrodite*).

## Mythology[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=2)]

### Birth[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=3)]

[thumb|410px|](/wiki/File:Sandro_Botticelli_-_La_nascita_di_Venere_-_Google_Art_Project_-_edited.jpg)[*The Birth of Venus*](/wiki/The_Birth_of_Venus) by [Sandro Botticelli](/wiki/Sandro_Botticelli), *circa* 1485. Aphrodite is usually said to have been born near her chief center of worship, [Paphos](/wiki/Paphos), on the island of [Cyprus](/wiki/Cyprus), which is why she is sometimes called "Cyprian", especially in the poetic works of [Sappho](/wiki/Sappho). However, other versions of her myth have her born near the island of [Cythera](/wiki/Cythera_(island)), hence another of her names, "Cytherea".[[14]](#cite_note-14) Cythera was a stopping place for trade and culture between [Crete](/wiki/Crete) and the [Peloponesus](/wiki/Peloponnese), so these stories may preserve traces of the migration of Aphrodite's cult from the [Middle East](/wiki/Levant) to mainland [Greece](/wiki/Greece).

In the most famous version of her myth, her birth was the consequence of a castration: [Cronus](/wiki/Cronus) severed [Uranus'](/wiki/Uranus_(mythology)) genitals and threw them behind him into the sea. The foam from his genitals gave rise to Aphrodite (hence her name, meaning "foam-arisen"), while the [Erinyes](/wiki/Erinyes) (furies), and the [Meliae](/wiki/Meliae) emerged from the drops of his blood.[[15]](#cite_note-15) [Hesiod](/wiki/Hesiod's_Theogony) states that the genitals "were carried over the sea a long time, and white foam arose from the immortal flesh; with it a girl grew." The girl, Aphrodite, floated ashore on a [scallop](/wiki/Scallop) shell. This iconic representation of Aphrodite as a mature "Venus rising from the sea" ([*Venus Anadyomene*](/wiki/Venus_Anadyomene)[[16]](#cite_note-16)) was made famous in a much-admired painting by [Apelles](/wiki/Apelles), now lost, but described in the [*Natural History*](/wiki/Natural_History_(Pliny)) of [Pliny the Elder](/wiki/Pliny_the_Elder).

[thumb|right|250px|](/wiki/File:Aphrodites_Rock.jpg)[Petra tou Romiou](/wiki/Petra_tou_Romiou) ("The rock of the [Greek](/wiki/Greeks)"), Aphrodite's legendary birthplace in [Paphos](/wiki/Paphos), Cyprus.

In another version of her origin,[[17]](#cite_note-17) she was considered a daughter of Zeus and [Dione](/wiki/Dione_(Titaness/Oceanid)), the mother goddess whose oracle was at [Dodona](/wiki/Dodona). Aphrodite herself was sometimes also referred to as "Dione". "Dione" seems to be a feminine form of "Dios", "of Zeus", the [genitive](/wiki/Genitive) form case of [Zeus](/wiki/Zeus), and could be taken to mean simply "(she) that belongs to Zeus" in a generic sense. Aphrodite might, then, be an equivalent of [Rhea](/wiki/Rhea_(mythology)), the [Earth Mother](/wiki/Earth_Mother), whom Homer relocated to Olympus.

### Adulthood[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]

Aphrodite is consistently portrayed, in every image and story, as having had no childhood, and instead being born as a nubile, infinitely desirable adult. She is often depicted nude. In many of the later myths, she is portrayed as vain, ill-tempered, and easily offended. Although she is married—she is one of the few gods in the [Greek Pantheon](/wiki/List_of_Greek_mythological_characters) who is—she is frequently unfaithful to her husband.

According to one version of Aphrodite's story, because of her immense beauty Zeus fears that the other gods will become violent with each other in their rivalry to possess her. To forestall this, he forces her to marry [Hephaestus](/wiki/Hephaestus), the dour, humorless god of smithing. In another version of the story, his mother, [Hera](/wiki/Hera) casts him off Olympus, deeming him too ugly and deformed to inhabit the home of the gods. His revenge is to trap his mother in a magic throne. In return for her release, he demands to be given Aphrodite's hand in marriage.

Hephaestus is overjoyed to be married to the goddess of beauty, and forges her beautiful jewelry, including the *cestus*, a girdle (more properly a [*strophion*](/wiki/History_of_bras#Greece), an undergarment which accentuated the breast[[18]](#cite_note-18)) that makes her even more irresistible to men. Her unhappiness with her marriage causes Aphrodite to seek other male companionship, most often Ares, but also sometimes [Adonis](/wiki/Adonis).

Aphrodite's husband [Hephaestus](/wiki/Hephaestus) is one of the most even-tempered of the Hellenic deities, but in the [*Odyssey*](/wiki/Odyssey), she is portrayed as preferring [Ares](/wiki/Ares), the volatile god of war, because she is attracted to his violent nature.

Aphrodite is a major figure in the [Trojan War](/wiki/Trojan_War) legend. She is a contestant in the "Judgement of Paris" (see below), which leads to the war. She had been the lover of the Trojan [Anchises](/wiki/Anchises), and mother of his son [Aeneas](/wiki/Aeneas). Later, during the war, she saves Aeneas from [Diomedes](/wiki/Diomedes), who wounds her.

### Adonis[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=5)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|370px|*Venus and*](/wiki/File:Titian_(Tiziano_Vecellio)_(Italian_-_Venus_and_Adonis_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg) [*Adonis*](/wiki/Adonis) by [Titian](/wiki/Titian), *circa* 1554.

The most prominent lover of Aphrodite is [Adonis](/wiki/Adonis). He is the child of [Myrrha](/wiki/Myrrha), cursed by Aphrodite with insatiable lust for her own father, King [Cinyras](/wiki/Cinyras) of [Cyprus](/wiki/Cyprus), after Myrrha's mother bragged that her daughter is more beautiful than the goddess. Driven out after becoming pregnant, Myrrha is changed into a [myrrh](/wiki/Myrrh) tree, but still gives birth to Adonis.

Aphrodite finds the baby, and takes him to the underworld to be fostered by [Persephone](/wiki/Persephone). She returns for him when he is grown and strikingly handsome, but Persephone wants to keep him. Zeus decrees that Adonis will spend a third of the year with Aphrodite, a third with Persephone, and a third with whomever he wishes. Adonis chooses Aphrodite, and they are constantly together.

Adonis, who loves hunting, is slain by a wild boar. He bleeds to death, and Aphrodite can only mourn over his body. She causes [anemones](/wiki/Anemone) to grow wherever his blood fell, and decrees a festival on the anniversary of his death.

The shade of Adonis is received in the underworld by Persephone. Aphrodite wants to return him to life. Again, she and Persephone bicker. Zeus intervenes again, decreeing that Adonis will spend six months with Aphrodite and six months with Persephone.

### The Judgement of Paris[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main)

[thumb|right||This painting shows](/wiki/File:Enrique_Simonet_-_El_Juicio_de_Paris_-_1904.jpg) [Paris](/wiki/Paris_(mythology)) surveying Aphrodite naked, with the other two goddesses watching nearby. This is one of the [numerous works](/wiki/Judgement_of_Paris#Gallery) that depict the event. ([*El Juicio de Paris*](/wiki/El_Juicio_de_Paris_(Simonet)) by [Enrique Simonet](/wiki/Enrique_Simonet), *circa* 1904)

The gods are all invited to the marriage of [Peleus](/wiki/Peleus) and [Thetis](/wiki/Thetis) (the eventual parents of [Achilles](/wiki/Achilles)), except [Eris](/wiki/Eris_(mythology)), goddess of discord. In revenge, Eris makes a golden [Apple of Discord](/wiki/Apple_of_Discord) inscribed *kallistēi* ("to the fairest one"), which she throws among the goddesses. Aphrodite, [Hera](/wiki/Hera), and [Athena](/wiki/Athena) all claim it.

[Zeus](/wiki/Zeus) delegates the choice to a mortal, [Paris](/wiki/Paris_(mythology)). The goddesses offer him bribes. Hera offers him supreme power, and Athena offers him wisdom, fame, and glory in battle. Aphrodite offers him [Helen of Troy](/wiki/Helen_of_Troy), the most beautiful mortal woman in the world, as a wife. As the goddess of desire, she causes Paris to become inflamed with desire for Helen at first sight, and he awards the Apple to her. Helen is already married to King [Menelaus](/wiki/Menelaus) of [Sparta](/wiki/Sparta#Prehistory). The other two goddesses are enraged by this, and through Helen's abduction by Paris, they bring about the [Trojan War](/wiki/Trojan_War).

### Consorts and children[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]

1. [Hephaestus](/wiki/Hephaestus)
2. [Ares](/wiki/Ares)
   1. [Phobos](/wiki/Phobos_(mythology))
   2. [Deimos](/wiki/Deimos_(mythology))
   3. [Harmonia](/wiki/Harmonia_(mythology))
   4. [Adrestia](/wiki/Adrestia) (or [Adrasteia](/wiki/Adrasteia) (nymph) or [Adrasteia (goddess)](/wiki/Adrasteia_(goddess)))
   5. [The Erotes](/wiki/Erotes_(mythology))
      1. [Eros](/wiki/Eros)[[19]](#cite_note-19)### [Anteros](/wiki/Anteros)
      2. [Himeros](/wiki/Himeros)
      3. [Pothos](/wiki/Pothos_(mythology))
3. [Poseidon](/wiki/Poseidon)
   1. [Rhode](/wiki/Rhode_(mythology)) (possibly)
4. [Hermes](/wiki/Hermes)
   1. [Tyche](/wiki/Tyche) (possibly)
   2. [Hermaphroditos](/wiki/Hermaphroditos)
5. [Dionysus](/wiki/Dionysus)
   1. The [Charites](/wiki/Charites) (Graces)
      1. [Thalia](/wiki/Thalia_(Grace))
      2. [Euphrosyne](/wiki/Euphrosyne_(mythology))
      3. [Aglaea](/wiki/Aglaea)
   2. [Priapus](/wiki/Priapus) ([N.B.](/wiki/Nota_bene) Some say that Adonis, not Dionysus was the father of Priapus)<ref name=Graves70>[Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)</ref>
6. Zeus
   1. Tyche (possibly)
7. [Adonis](/wiki/Adonis)
   1. [Beroe](/wiki/Beroe_(mythology))
   2. [Golgos](/wiki/Golgos)[[20]](#cite_note-20)# [Phaethon (son of Eos)](/wiki/Phaethon_(son_of_Eos))
   3. Astynoos
8. [Anchises](/wiki/Anchises)
   1. [Aeneas](/wiki/Aeneas)
   2. Lyrus
9. [Butes](/wiki/Butes)
   1. [Eryx](/wiki/Eryx)
10. unknown father
    1. Meligounis + several more unnamed daughters[[21]](#cite_note-21)## [Peitho](/wiki/Peitho)

### Other myths[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=8)]

[thumb|*Aphrodite Ourania*, draped rather than nude, with her foot resting on a](/wiki/File:Turtle_Aphrodite_AO20126_mp3h9188.jpg) [tortoise](/wiki/Tortoise) ([Musée du Louvre](/wiki/Musée_du_Louvre))

In one version of [the legend of Hippolytus](/wiki/Hippolytus_(mythology)), Aphrodite is the cause of his death. He scorned the worship of Aphrodite, preferring [Artemis](/wiki/Artemis). Aphrodite caused his stepmother, [Phaedra](/wiki/Phaedra_(mythology)), to fall in love with him, knowing Hippolytus would reject her. This led to Phaedra's suicide, and the death of Hippolytus.

[Glaucus](/wiki/Glaucus_(son_of_Sisyphus)) of Corinth angered Aphrodite. During the chariot race at the funeral games of King [Pelias](/wiki/Pelias), she drove his horses mad and they tore him apart.[[22]](#cite_note-22) [Polyphonte](/wiki/Polyphonte) was a young woman who chose virginal life with Artemis instead of marriage and children, as favoured by Aphrodite. Aphrodite cursed her, causing her to have children by a bear. The resulting offspring, Agrius and Oreius, were wild cannibals who incurred the hatred of Zeus. Ultimately the whole family were transformed into birds and more specifically ill portents for mankind.[[23]](#cite_note-23)

## Forms of Aphrodite[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=9)]

[Template:About](/wiki/Template:About) [thumb|](/wiki/File:The_Birth_of_Venus_by_William-Adolphe_Bouguereau_(1879).jpg)[*The Birth of Venus*](/wiki/The_Birth_of_Venus_(Bouguereau)) by [William-Adolphe Bouguereau](/wiki/William-Adolphe_Bouguereau), c. 1879

By the late 5th century BC, certain philosophers had begun to draw a distinction between two separate "Aphrodites" (as opposed to a single Aphrodite whose characteristics varied slightly in different local cults of the goddess): *Aphrodite Ourania*, the celestial Aphrodite, born from the sea foam after Cronus castrated Uranus, and *Aphrodite Pandemos*, the common Aphrodite "of all the folk", born from the union of Zeus and [Dione](/wiki/Dione_(Titaness/Oceanid)).[[24]](#cite_note-24) Among the [neo-Platonists](/wiki/Neo-Platonist) and, later, their Christian interpreters, Aphrodite Ourania is associated with spiritual love, and Aphrodite Pandemos with physical love (desire). A representation of Aphrodite Ourania with her foot resting on a tortoise came to be seen as emblematic of discretion in conjugal love. (We know of this representation, said to have been a [chryselephantine](/wiki/Chryselephantine) sculpture made by [Phidias](/wiki/Phidias) for [Elis](/wiki/Elis), only from a parenthetical comment by the geographer [Pausanias](/wiki/Pausanias_(geographer))).[[25]](#cite_note-25) In the [*Symposium*](/wiki/Symposium_(Plato)),[[26]](#cite_note-26) of [Plato](/wiki/Plato), [Pausanias](/wiki/Pausanias_of_Athens) (no relation to the geographer Pausanias) describes Aphrodite. He distinguishes two manifestations of Aphrodite, represented by the two stories of her creation. The older one, *Aphrodite Ourania* ("heavenly" Aphrodite), is the daughter of Uranus, and inspires homosexual male (and more specifically, [ephebic](/wiki/Ephebic_Oath)) love/eros. The younger, *Aphrodite Pandemos* ("Common" Aphrodite) is the daughter of Zeus and Dione, and all love for women comes from her.[[27]](#cite_note-27) Aphrodite is also known as Areia, showing her connection to Ares, the god of war, with whom she had extramarital relations.[[28]](#cite_note-28) As a result, she was, to some extent, made into a goddess of war. This is especially true in Sparta.

## Cult of Aphrodite[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=10)]

[Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) The epithet *Aphrodite Acidalia* was occasionally added to her name, after the spring she used for bathing, located in [Boeotia](/wiki/Boeotia) ([Virgil](/wiki/Virgil) I, 720). She was also called *Kypris* or *Cytherea* after her birth-places in [Cyprus](/wiki/Cyprus) and [Cythera](/wiki/Cythera_(island)), respectively, both centers of her cult. She was associated with [Hesperia](/wiki/Hesperides) and frequently accompanied by the [Oreads](/wiki/Oread), [nymphs](/wiki/Nymph) of the mountains.

Her festival, [*Aphrodisia*](/wiki/Aphrodisia), was celebrated across Greece, but particularly in [Athens](/wiki/Athens) and [Corinth](/wiki/Ancient_Corinth). At the temple of Aphrodite on the summit of [Acrocorinth](/wiki/Acrocorinth) (before the Roman destruction of the city in 146 BC), intercourse with her priestesses was considered a method of worshiping Aphrodite. This temple was not rebuilt when the city was re-established under Roman rule in 44 BC, but the fertility rituals likely continued in the main city near the agora.

Aphrodite was associated with, and often depicted with, the sea, dolphins, doves, swans, [pomegranates](/wiki/Pomegranate), sceptres, apples, [myrtle](/wiki/Myrtus), rose trees, [lime](/wiki/Lime_(fruit)) trees, clams, scallop shells, and pearls.

One aspect of the [cult](/wiki/Cult_(religion)) of Aphrodite and her precedents that [Thomas Bulfinch's](/wiki/Thomas_Bulfinch) much-reprinted *The Age of Fable; or Stories of Gods and Heroes* (1855 etc.) elided[[29]](#cite_note-29) was the practice of [ritual prostitution](/wiki/Religious_prostitution) in her shrines and temples. The euphemism in Greek is *hierodoule*, "sacred slave." The practice was an inherent part of the rituals owed to Aphrodite's Near Eastern forebears, Sumerian [Inanna](/wiki/Inanna) and Akkadian [Ishtar](/wiki/Ishtar), whose temple priestesses were the "women of Ishtar," *ishtaritum*.[[30]](#cite_note-30) The practice has been documented in Babylon, Syria, and Palestine, in Phoenician cities and the [Tyrian](/wiki/Tyre,_Lebanon) colony [Carthage](/wiki/Carthage), and for Hellenic Aphrodite in [Cyprus](/wiki/Cyprus), the center of her cult, Cythera, [Corinth](/wiki/Ancient_Corinth), and in Sicily (Marcovich 1996:49); the practice however is not attested in Athens. Aphrodite was everywhere the patroness of the [*hetaera*](/wiki/Hetaera) and [courtesan](/wiki/Courtesan). In [Ionia](/wiki/Ionia) on the coast of Asia Minor, [*hierodoulai*](/wiki/Hierodule) served in the [temple of Artemis](/wiki/Temple_of_Artemis).

### Modern worship of Aphrodite[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=11)]

As one of the Twelve Olympians of the Greek pantheon and thus a major deity, worship of Aphrodite, (or *Aphrodíti*), as a living goddess is one of the more prominent devotionals in [*Hellenismos*](/wiki/Hellenismos) (Hellenic Polytheistic Reconstructionism),[[31]](#cite_note-31) the revival of ancient Greek religious practices in the present day.[[32]](#cite_note-32) Hellenic polytheists of today celebrate their religious devotion to Aphrodite on two annual and monthly festival days. Aphrodisia is her main festival day, which is celebrated on the 4th day of *Hekatombaion* in the [Attic calendar](/wiki/Attic_calendar), falling in the months of July and August in the [Gregorian calendar](/wiki/Gregorian_calendar), depending on the year. Adonia, a joint festival of Aphrodite and her partner Adonis, is celebrated on the first [full moon](/wiki/Full_moon) following the [Northern spring equinox](/wiki/Northern_spring_equinox), often roughly as the same week the Christian festival of [Easter](/wiki/Easter) is celebrated. The fourth day of each month is considered a sacred day of both Aphrodite and her son Eros.[[33]](#cite_note-33) Devotional offerings to Aphrodite can include incense, fruit (particularly apples and pomegranates), flowers (particularly fragrant roses), sweet dessert wine (particularly *Commandaria* wine from [Cyprus](/wiki/Cyprus)), and cakes made with honey.[[34]](#cite_note-34)[[35]](#cite_note-35)

## Comparative mythology[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=12)]

### Ancient Near Eastern parallels[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=13)]

The [religions of the ancient Near East](/wiki/Religions_of_the_ancient_Near_East) have a number of love goddesses that may be similar to certain aspects of Aphrodite.

Her cult in Greece was imported from, or influenced by, the cult of [Astarte](/wiki/Astarte) in [Phoenicia](/wiki/Phoenicia).

Hans Georg Wunderlich further connects Aphrodite with the [Minoan](/wiki/Minoan_civilization) [snake goddess](/wiki/Snake_Goddess).[[36]](#cite_note-36) The Egyptian snake goddess [Wadjet](/wiki/Wadjet) was associated with the city known to the Greeks as *Aphroditopolis* (the city of Aphrodite).[[37]](#cite_note-37) [Pausanias](/wiki/Pausanias_(geographer)) states the first to establish a cult of Aphrodite were the [Assyrians](/wiki/Neo-Assyrian_Empire), after the Assyrians, the [Paphians](/wiki/Paphos) of Cyprus, and then the Phoenicians at [Ascalon](/wiki/Ashkelon). The Phoenicians, in turn, taught her worship to the people of [Cythera](/wiki/Cythera_(island)).[[38]](#cite_note-38) An origin of (or significant influence on) the Greek love goddess from Near Eastern traditions was seen with some skepticism in classical 19th century scholarship. Authors such as A. Enmann (*Kypros und der Ursprung des Aphroditekultes* 1881) attempted to portray the cult of Aphrodite as a native Greek development.

Scholarly opinion on this question has shifted significantly since the 1980s, notably due to [Walter Burkert](/wiki/Walter_Burkert) (1984), and the significant influence of the Near East on early Greek religion in general (and on the cult of Aphrodite in particular) is now widely recognized as dating to a period of [orientalization](/wiki/Orientalizing_period) during the 8th century BC, when [archaic Greece](/wiki/Archaic_Greece) was on the fringes of the [Neo-Assyrian Empire](/wiki/Neo-Assyrian_Empire).[[39]](#cite_note-39) In native Greek tradition, the planet Venus had two names, *Hesperos* as the evening star and *Eosphoros* as the morning star. The Greeks adopted the identification of the morning and the evening stars, as well as its identification as Ishtar/Aphrodite, during the 4th century BC, along with other items of Babylonian astrology, such as the [zodiac](/wiki/Zodiac) ([Eudoxus of Cnidus](/wiki/Eudoxus_of_Cnidus)).

### Comparison with the Indo-European dawn goddess[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=14)]

It has long been accepted in [comparative mythology](/wiki/Comparative_mythology) that Aphrodite (regardless of possible oriental influences) preserves some aspects of the [Indo-European](/wiki/Proto-Indo-European_mythology) dawn goddess [\*Hausos](/wiki/Hausos) (properly Greek [Eos](/wiki/Eos), Latin [Aurora](/wiki/Aurora_(mythology)), Sanskrit [Ushas](/wiki/Ushas)).[[40]](#cite_note-40) Janda (2010) etymologizes her name as "she who rises from the foam [of the ocean]" and points to Hesiod's *Theogony* account of Aphrodite's birth as an archaic reflex of Indo-European myth. Aphrodite rising out of the waters after Cronus defeats Uranus as a mytheme would then be directly cognate to the [Rigvedic](/wiki/Rig_Veda) myth of [Indra](/wiki/Indra) defeating [Vrtra](/wiki/Vrtra), liberating [Ushas](/wiki/Ushas).[[3]](#cite_note-3)

## Gallery[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=15)]

<gallery> File:CallipygianVenus.jpg|*The* [*Venus Kallipygos*](/wiki/Venus_Kallipygos)*.* *Aphrodite Kallipygos* ("Aphrodite of the Beautiful Buttocks"),[[41]](#cite_note-41) is a type of nude female statue of the [Hellenistic](/wiki/Hellenistic) era. It depicts a partially draped woman[[42]](#cite_note-42) raising her light [peplos](/wiki/Peplos)[[43]](#cite_note-43) to uncover her [hips](/wiki/Hip_(anatomy)#Cultural_significance_of_hips) and [buttocks](/wiki/Buttocks), and looking back and down over her shoulder, perhaps to evaluate them File:Cnidus Aphrodite Altemps Inv8619.jpg|The Ludovisi *Cnidian Aphrodite*, Roman marble copy (torso and thighs) with restored head, arms, legs and drapery support. The [*Aphrodite of Cnidus*](/wiki/Aphrodite_of_Cnidus) was one of the most famous works of the [Attic](/wiki/Attica) [sculptor](/wiki/Sculpture) [Praxiteles](/wiki/Praxiteles) (4th century BC). File:Venere di Milo 02.JPG|[*Aphrodite of Milos*](/wiki/Aphrodite_of_Milos) (c.100 BC), [Louvre](/wiki/Louvre) File:Venus pudica Massimo.jpg|[*Aphrodite of Menophantos*](/wiki/Aphrodite_of_Menophantos) a [Venus Pudica](/wiki/Venus_Pudica) signed by [Menophantos](/wiki/Menophantos), 1st century BC, found at San Gregorio al Celio, Rome ([Museo Nazionale Romano](/wiki/Museo_Nazionale_Romano)), of the [Capitoline Venus](/wiki/Capitoline_Venus) type. File:Aphrodite fountain.jpg|*Fountain of Aphrodite in* [*Mexico City*](/wiki/Mexico_City)*.* File:Aphrodite Heyl (2).jpg|[*Aphrodite Heyl*](/wiki/Aphrodite_Heyl), [terracotta](/wiki/Terracotta) statuette of very high quality, probably from [Myrina](/wiki/Myrina_(Mysia)), 2nd century BC File:Aphrodite Anadyomene from Pompeii cropped.jpg|The [Venus Anadyomene](/wiki/Venus_Anadyomene), from [Pompeii](/wiki/Pompeii), believed to be a copy of a lost work by [Apelles](/wiki/Apelles). File:Ludovisi throne Altemps Inv8570.jpg|The [Ludovisi Throne](/wiki/Ludovisi_Throne) (460 BC?) is believed to be a classical Greek [bas-relief](/wiki/Bas-relief), although it has also been alleged to be a 19th-century forgery File:Venus redon.jpeg|*The Birth of Venus* (1912), by [Odilon Redon](/wiki/Odilon_Redon). File:Aphrodite swan BM D2.jpg|Aphrodite riding a swan: Attic white-ground red-figured [*kylix*](/wiki/Kylix_(drinking_cup)), c. 460, found at Kameiros (Rhodes). </gallery>

## See also[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=16)]

[Template:Portal](/wiki/Template:Portal) [Hellenismos](/wiki/Hellenismos)

## References and sources[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=17)]

References

[Template:Reflist](/wiki/Template:Reflist)

Sources

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* Walter Burkert (1985). *Greek Religion* ([Harvard University Press](/wiki/Harvard_University_Press)).

## External links[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=18)]

[Template:Wiktionary](/wiki/Template:Wiktionary) [Template:Commons](/wiki/Template:Commons)

* [Theoi Project, Aphrodite](http://www.theoi.com/Olympios/Aphrodite.html) information from classical literature, Greek and Roman art
* [The Glory which Was Greece from a Female Perspective](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/12/19/arts/design/19wome.html?em)
* [Sappho's Hymn to Aphrodite, with a brief explanation](http://afrodite.saffo.googlepages.com/aphrodite-sappho.html)`

[Template:Greek myth (Olympian)](/wiki/Template:Greek_myth_(Olympian)) [Template:Greek religion](/wiki/Template:Greek_religion) [Template:Greek mythology (deities)](/wiki/Template:Greek_mythology_(deities)) [Template:List of mythological figures by region](/wiki/Template:List_of_mythological_figures_by_region) [Template:Paganism](/wiki/Template:Paganism) [Template:Paganism topics (contemporary)](/wiki/Template:Paganism_topics_(contemporary))

[Template:Authority control](/wiki/Template:Authority_control) [Category:Aphrodite](/wiki/Category:Aphrodite) [Category:Love and lust goddesses](/wiki/Category:Love_and_lust_goddesses) [Category:Fertility goddesses](/wiki/Category:Fertility_goddesses) [Category:Sexuality in ancient Greece](/wiki/Category:Sexuality_in_ancient_Greece) [Category:Sexuality and religion](/wiki/Category:Sexuality_and_religion) [Category:Deities in the Iliad](/wiki/Category:Deities_in_the_Iliad) [Category:Greek goddesses](/wiki/Category:Greek_goddesses) [Category:Ancient Greek religion](/wiki/Category:Ancient_Greek_religion) [Category:Indo-European deities](/wiki/Category:Indo-European_deities) [Category:Requests for audio pronunciation (Greek)](/wiki/Category:Requests_for_audio_pronunciation_(Greek)) [Category:Greek Love and Lust Deities](/wiki/Category:Greek_Love_and_Lust_Deities)