



A N N O 2 0 1 7

IMBOLC

Imbolc or Imbolg is a Gaelic traditional festival marking the beginning of spring. Christians observe it as the feast day of Saint Brigid, especially in Ireland.

This day traditionally marks the first stirrings of spring. It is time for purification and spring cleaning in anticipation of the year's new life. In Rome, it was historically a shepherd's holiday and among Celts associated with the onset of ewes' lactation, prior to birthing the spring lambs.

LAMMAS

Lammas or Lughnasadh is a festival to mark the annual wheat harvest, and is the first harvest festival of the year. On this day it was customary to bring to church a loaf made from the new crop, which began to be harvested at Lammas tide.

OSTARA

Ostara or Eostre is a Germanic goddess of dawn and "daughter of heaven". She is associated with the coming of spring, and her festival is celebrated at the spring equinox. She brings renewal and rebirth from the death of winter.

Easter imagery often involves hares, rabbits, and eggs.

MABON

The holiday of the autumnal equinox, Harvest Home, Mabon, the Feast of the Ingathering, is a ritual of thanksgiving for the fruits of the earth and a recognition of the need to share them.

Mabon is a time to reflect on the previous year, to celebrate successes and assess which crops, projects, or dreams didn't come to fruition.

BELTANE

Traditionally the first day of summer in Ireland, in Rome the earliest celebrations appeared in pre-Christian times with the festival of Flora, the Roman goddess of flowers, and the Walpurgis Night celebrations of the Germanic countries.

It is well known for maypole dancing and the crowning of the Queen of the May.

SAMHAIN

Samhain is considered by some as a time to celebrate the lives of those who have passed on, and it often involves paying respect to ancestors, family members, elders of the faith, friends, pets, and other loved ones who have died. In some rituals the spirits of the departed are invited to attend the festivities.

It is seen as a festival of darkness, which is balanced at the opposite point of the wheel by the festival of Beltane, which is celebrated as a festival of light and fertility.

LITHA

Litha or Midsummer, also known as St John's Day, is considered the turning point at which summer reaches its height and the sun shines longest.

The best-known midsummer ritual is the lighting of the bonfire and jumping over it.

YULE

The reversal of the Sun's ebbing presence in the sky presages the return of fertile seasons. Feasting and gift giving are common elements of Midwinter festivities. Bringing sprigs and wreaths of evergreenery (such as holly, ivy, mistletoe, yew, and pine) into the home and tree decorating are also common during this time.

This liminal festival marks the last month of the old year and the first month of the new year and is followed by eleven days of extended celebration.