



Autumn Equinox

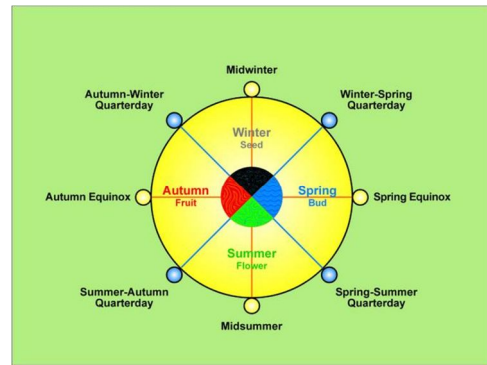
Festival of Consummation

20-22 September

The autumn equinox marks the mid-point of autumn and one of the two times of the year when the daylight and night-time hours are equal, with the Sun rising at 6:00 am and setting at 6:00 pm on an ideal horizon. The equinox occurs on or about 22 September, being variable between 21-23 September (see footnote on Solar Festivals).

In Celtic/Anglo-Saxon countries the equinoctial festival is known as Mabon. It is the second of the three harvest festivals and is celebrated in the Christian calendar as the main Harvest Festival. It is also known as the Feast of Avalon and Festival of the Wine Harvest. Feast of Avalon refers to the Apple Harvest, for one of the principal meanings of Avalon is 'land of apples'. This is actually a reference to the Hesperides, a mystical island belonging to Atlantis, where Merlin was nourished, inspired and enlightened (like the Buddha) whilst seated beneath an apple tree in the Hesperidean orchards. The apple tree is the Tree of Knowledge or Enlightenment.

Mabon is another name for the Sun-god in his role as a warrior for truth in the battle against ignorance, brutality and vice. In the Arthurian stories he is presented as the son of Mordred. Kidnapped at the age of three and later rescued by King Arthur, with spear in hand he became the great hunter of the wild boar. All knight-followers of Arthur represent aspects of the Sun-god. In Christian tradition Mabon is represented as the Archangel Michael, whose feastday is 28 September. The actual day of the equinox, however, is more exactly marked in the Christian calendar by the Feast of St Matthew (21 September).



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