



The Summer Solstice: Celebrating the Journey of the Sun from May Day to Harvest

John Matthews

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Wherever we are, we are under the sun. As it rises, we greet the new day; as it melts away at dusk, we return to hearth and home for rest. Its life-giving warmth undoubtedly inspired humanity's oldest rituals, especially at the winter and summer solstices in December and June, when the sun's strength begins to wax or wane as the seasons change again. Reclaiming these ancient traditions for contemporary use, this stunning new book completes the cycle John Matthews began in his 1998 award-winning *The Winter Solstice*. His subject is the mythic history of the sun as a source of fertility and fortune worldwide--from ancient sun gods and ceremonial dances, to the European customs of the Maypole and the love magic of Midsummer Night, to rituals for harvesting rice in the Far East. Today we can still come together at May Day, Midsummer, and Harvest-time, just as our ancestors did. Resplendent with full-color illustrations, this multicultural sourcebook helps us connect with the past and celebrate the present with stories and songs, crafts and games, and recipes for feasting to enjoy with family and friends.

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