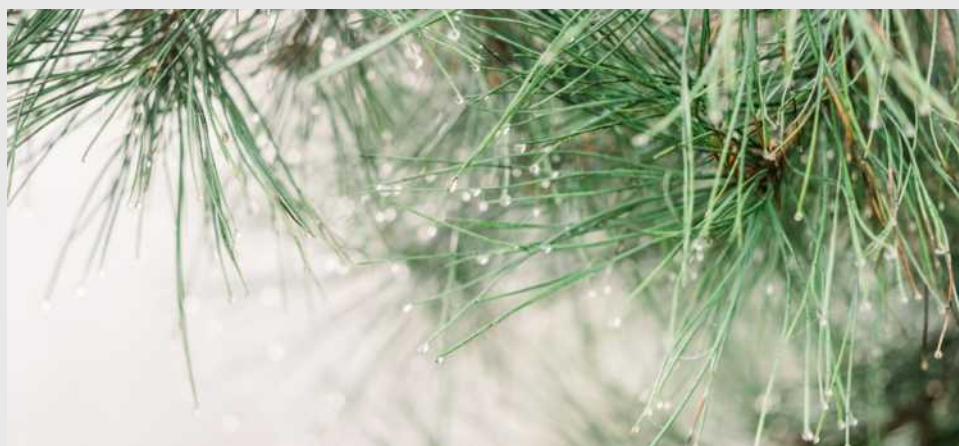


YULE



WINTER
SOLSTICE
Guide to celebrate



The Pagan meaning of Yule

Yule is a pagan winter solstice festival that has been celebrated for centuries in various forms by Germanic pagans, Celtic pagans, and neopagans.

It celebrates the rebirth of the sun, as the solstice marks the point where the days start to become longer again. It is seen as a time of new beginnings.

It honors the winter goddess and the divine feminine, often connecting to goddesses like Holda, Brigid, and Modranicht.

It represents the battle between the oak king, who rules the half of the year from the summer solstice up until Yule, and the holly king, who rules from Yule to the summer solstice. At Yule, the oak king surrenders to the holly king.

Traditional practices include burning the Yule log, decorating with holly, mistletoe, evergreens, exchanging gifts, feasting, dancing, singing, and making offerings to gods and spirits.



AMAZING AMBER

Wear an amber pendant to parties to absorb negative energy and stress, hung on a gold chain to represent the Sun God's energy.

History & Traditions

OF THE WINTER SOLSTICE AND YULE

The Winter Solstice marks the shortest day and longest night of the year in the Northern Hemisphere, when the sun appears at its lowest point in the sky.

- *It is a significant turning point, signaling the return of longer days and the beginning of winter.*
- *Many ancient peoples tracked the solstices and equinoxes carefully, building monuments like Stonehenge and Newgrange to mark them.*
- *The Winter Solstice is deeply tied to many mythologies as the rebirth of the sun. The Norse held Yule feasts for the god Baldur, while the Romans celebrated Saturnalia in honor of Saturn.*
- *The pagan Germanic peoples honored the solstice as Yule, holding 12 days of feasting and sacrifice. Fires and candles were lit to welcome the sun's revival.*

Yule

THEMES & SYMBOLS

ASTROLOGICAL DATE: Sun at 0° Capricorn

SEASONAL FOCUS: The Returning of the Light

Herbs & plants: Bay Laurel, Blessed thistle, Chamomile, Evergreen trees, Holly, Ivy, Mistletoe, Oak

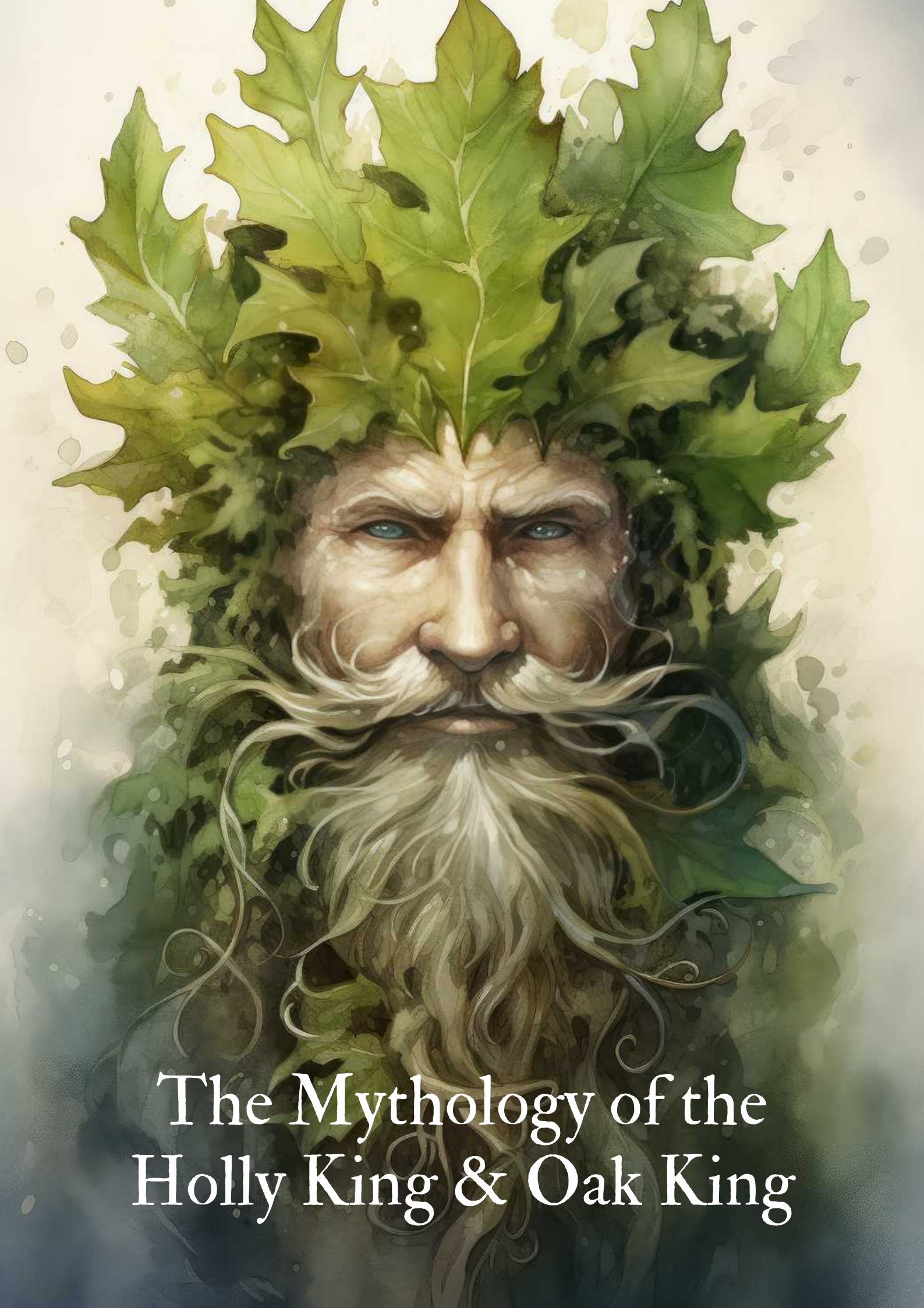
Foods: Apple Cider, Dried fruits, Egg nog, Gingerbread, Mulled wine, Roasted apples

Crystals: Bloodstone, Clear Quartz, Diamond, Emerald, Garnet, Ruby.

Animals: Bears, Deers, Owls, Phoenix, Reindeers, Squirrels, Stags, Ravens.

Oils: Cinnamon, Ginger, Orange, Pine, Wintergreen.

Colors: Gold, Green, Red, White.



The Mythology of the
Holly King & Oak King

The Oak King represents the waxing year and the cycle of growth.

He is associated with the summer solstice. The Oak King is seen as a young god, bold and ambitious, connected to the expansive light and energy of summer.

The Holly King represents the waning year and the cycle of withdrawal.

He is associated with the winter solstice. The Holly King is an old god, wise and reflective, connected to the darkness and introspection of winter.

Each year, the two kings battle for dominance as the seasons change.

At the summer solstice, the Oak King defeats the Holly King and reigns over the summer months. At the winter solstice, the Holly King defeats the Oak King and reigns over the winter months.

Their battle represents the constant struggle between growth/life and withdrawal/death in nature.

Each king reigns for half of the year until the wheel turns and the other takes over.

The Oak King at midsummer is at the height of his strength while the Holly King at midwinter is at his most powerful.

Their waxing and waning energies shape the cycle of the year.

Yule Activities

HOW TO CELEBRATE YULETIDE

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Create a Yule altar | <input type="checkbox"/> | Forage for pinecones |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Perform an abundance ritual | <input type="checkbox"/> | Perform a house cleansing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Go for a walk in nature | <input type="checkbox"/> | Start a new project |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Decorate a Yule Tree | <input type="checkbox"/> | Burn Sage or Pine incense |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Host a Yule feast | <input type="checkbox"/> | Reflection journaling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Bake gingerbread | <input type="checkbox"/> | Enjoy a Yule tea blend |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Do a sun welcoming ritual | <input type="checkbox"/> | Kiss under the Mistletoe |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Embrace snow magic | <input type="checkbox"/> | Make a Yule log |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Do a Tarot card reading | <input type="checkbox"/> | Donate to a food bank |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Wear Yule colors | <input type="checkbox"/> | Craft Evergreen wreaths |



*Tonight we welcome back the
light, our wishes take to spirit
flight*

I 2

Nights of Yule

The 12 nights of Yule refer to the 12 days between the Winter Solstice and the beginning of the next solar year

I *Celebrate the return of the light and the rebirth of the sun on the Winter Solstice, often with fire, candles, and celebrations.*

2 *Honor family ancestors and those who have passed. Leave an offering or light a candle for them.*

3 *A night of divination and fortune telling - break out the tarot cards, runes, etc.*

4 *Make offerings to the nature spirits, like leaving treats for helpful gnomes or kind sprites.*

5 *Have a feast and make merry! Eat, drink, sing, and dance in celebration*

I2 Nights of Yule

6 *Exchange gifts and perform random acts of kindness. Focus on giving rather than receiving.*

7 *Take a meditative walk in nature and reflect on the past year.*

8 *Do an energetic cleansing - sage your space, take a purifying bath. Clear out old energies.*

9 *Celebrate with coven, circle, or community if that's your tradition. Reaffirm bonds.*

10 *Honor the goddess by lighting pink candles, baking cakes, etc.*

11 *Prepare for the return of the world by tidying up space and making plans.*

I2 *On Epiphany eve, celebrate the end of the holiday and the start of a new cycle.*

a midwinter

Blessing



As the light grows and the days start to lengthen, May the spark of hope within you be fanned into flame.

As the cold recedes and gives way to warmer days, May your heart be filled with the warmth of love.

Though the earth now lies dormant, covered in snow, May the seeds of joy begin to sprout and grow.

May the blessings of the sun find you, Renewing your spirit as you journey through the cold.

May the earth sustain you, Its strength and wisdom cradling you with gentleness.

As you walk through this still and quiet season, May your soul find rest and illumination.

And when the light returns in brilliance reborn, May you celebrate the rejuvenation of the world.

This midwinter, I wish you the gifts of light, warmth, hope and inner peace. May you be renewed and inspired as the days grow longer from here.



IDEAS FOR LIQUID WARMTH

- *Hot cocoa - The classic! Make it extra rich and creamy by using high quality dark chocolate and warm milk or cream. Top with marshmallows, whipped cream, or a sprinkle of cinnamon.*
- *Mulled wine - Simmer red wine with oranges, cinnamon sticks, cloves and a little maple syrup or honey. For an alcohol-free version, use apple cider instead.*
- *Spiced apple cider - Warm up apple cider with a blend of spices like cinnamon, nutmeg, allspice, and cloves. For an extra treat, add a splash of rum or bourbon.*
- *Cranberry apple cider - Make your own cranberry juice by simmering fresh or frozen cranberries and apples. Strain and mix into apple cider.*
- *Mexican hot chocolate - Stir melted chocolate into warm milk with cinnamon, vanilla and a pinch of cayenne pepper for a kick.*
- *Pumpkin spice latte - Brew strong coffee and mix with heated milk, pumpkin puree, pumpkin pie spice and maple syrup. Top with whipped cream.*
- *Chai tea latte - Combine chai tea concentrate with steamed milk.*

Yule Kitchen

MAGIC YULE LOG CAKE

INGREDIENTS

Chocolate Cake:

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (98g) all-purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup (38g) Hershey's Special Dark cocoa powder
- 1 tsp baking powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt
- 4 large eggs, divided
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (155g) granulated sugar
- 5 tbsp (72g) sour cream
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup butter, melted
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

Mascarpone Whipped Cream

Filling:

- 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups (300ml) heavy whipping cream, cold
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cups (86g) powdered sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp salt
- 8 oz (226g) mascarpone cheese, softened but still chilled*

Whipped Chocolate Ganache:

- 8 ounces semi sweet chocolate, finely chopped
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- Sugared cranberries, optional*
- Sugared rosemary, optional*



MAGIC YULE LOG CAKE

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line a 17×12 inch jelly roll sheet pan with parchment paper. Make sure the parchment paper sticks up at least an inch above the sides of the pan on all sides. You'll use the parchment paper later to lift the cake out of the pan and roll it up.
2. Whisk the flour, cocoa, baking powder and salt together in a medium bowl and set aside.
3. In a large bowl, combine the egg yolks and sugar and whisk together until well combined.
4. Add the sour cream, melted butter and vanilla extract and whisk together until well combined.
5. Add the dry ingredients and gently whisk together until well combined, then set aside.
6. Add the egg whites to a large mixer bowl and whip on high speed until stiff peaks form.
7. Gently fold about 1/3 of the whipped egg whites into the chocolate mixture to loosen up the batter.
8. Add the remaining egg whites and gently fold together until well combined.
9. Spread the cake batter evenly into the prepared pan and bake for 10-12 minutes, or until the top of the cake springs back when touched and a toothpick inserted comes out clean.
10. Remove the cake from the oven and immediately lift the cake out of the pan using the parchment paper and place it on the counter.
11. While the cake is hot, use the parchment paper the cake was baked in and start at the shorter end of the cake to slowly roll the cake up. Set the cake aside to cool completely.

12. When the cake has cooled and is ready to be filled, make the filling. Add the heavy whipping cream, powdered sugar, vanilla extract and salt to a large mixer bowl and whip on high speed until soft peaks form.

13. Add the mascarpone cheese to the whipped cream and whip until stiff peaks form. It will happen fairly quickly.

14. Unroll the cake roll very carefully, looking out for areas where it may be sticking to release it. You can use an offset spatula or something similar and run it along the parchment paper as you unroll the cake to help release it as it unrolls.

15. Spread the filling evenly onto the unrolled cake, then roll it back up without the parchment paper.

16. Wrap it up in plastic wrap with the seam side down and refrigerate for at least an hour to firm up.

17. When you're ready to decorate the cake, make the chocolate ganache. Add the chocolate to a medium sized bowl and set aside. Heat the cream in the microwave just until it begins to boil, then pour it over the chocolate.

18. Allow the chocolate and cream to sit for a few minutes, then whisk until smooth. Let the ganache cool to about room temperature (or cooler, you don't want it too warm/thin), then transfer to a large mixer bowl.

19. Whip on high speed until lightened in color and thick enough to spread.

20. To decorate the cake, use a large serrated knife to gently cut off a piece of the log about 3 inches in length. Make the cut with a slight diagonal.

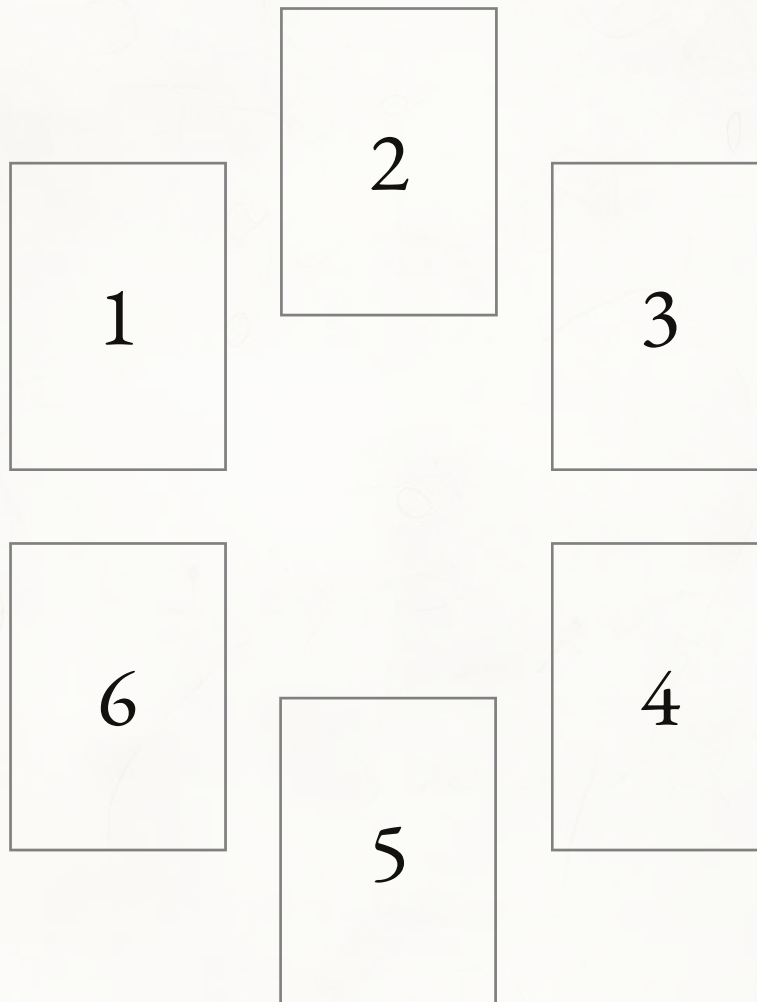
21. Use some of the chocolate ganache to attach the small log to the side of the larger log.

22. Spread the remaining chocolate ganache all over the cake, then use a fork to create bark-like lines all over it. Decorate with sugared cranberries and rosemary (instructions in notes), if desired.

23. Refrigerate the cake until ready to serve.

WINTER SOLSTICE

Tarot Spread



1. *What lessons or insights about myself might be revealed during this dark time of year?*
2. *How can I best care for myself physically, mentally, and spiritually as the light wanes?*
3. *What should I let go of or release to make room for new growth ahead?*
4. *How can I tap into my inner light and creativity during the long nights?*
5. *What intentions or visions for the coming year want to be seeded or contemplated?*
6. *What guidance, messages, or openings are coming through from my higher self or spirit guides?*

Journal Prompts

What are your intentions, hopes and wishes for the coming year?

What from the past year are you ready to release or let go of? What would you like to carry forward?

How does celebrating the solstice and the return of the light inspire you? What does it symbolize for you?

Make a list of things you'd like to nourish, grow, and cultivate in your life in the coming months.



Yuletide Blessings

As the wheel of the year turns once more, I wish you a most blessed Yule filled with light, warmth, and the magic of the season. May your home and hearth be filled with the aroma of festive foods, the glow of candlelight, and the joy of loved ones near. As the rebirth of the sun fills the darkest night with hope, may your heart also find renewal.

*Blessed be, and Yule tidings to you,
Laurie Barraco*