

S u m m e r

Fire

# The Strawberry Moon



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# The Strawberry Moon

With The Strawberry Moon comes just as the Flower Moon blossoms begin to fade and berries burst forth from bushes. To the Algonquin tribes of North America, June was synonymous with strawberries. This sweet, tangy and nutritious wild food staple was only available for a short time each year. So, June's full moon naturally came to be known as the Strawberry Moon.

Berries call out to everyone to enjoy in delight. This moon honors the ancient kinship between the earth and ourselves and it invites us to dance in a glorious short dance with these fruits. Their color, taste, and smell are the embodiment of abundance and joy. Berry season invites us to explore with all of our senses to welcome a feeling of exuberance and wholeness into our lives.

There are several different kinds of wild strawberries. The native North American type is the Virginia strawberry (*Fragaria virginiana*), also known as Mountain strawberry or Common strawberry.

Europe has its own native wild strawberry; the Alpine strawberry (*Fragaria vesca*), also called European strawberry, Woodland strawberry, or fraisier des bois.

In Europe, June's full Moon was known as the Rose Moon. This was the month when fragrant gardens reached their peak, and the rose bushes exploded into bold color, offering respite from the gray days of winter.

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Other names for this moon include Hot Moon, for the beginning of the summer heat. The Mead Moon as the Scandinavian name, and other sources quote Anglo-Saxon names as the Hoeing Moon and the Honey Moon. And yet more names that hail from Celtic origins: Moon of Horses, Lovers' Moon, Strong Sun Moon, Aerra Litha (Before Lithia), and Brachmanoth (Break Month).

Folklore says it's lucky to marry under the strawberry moon which may have given rise to the popularity of weddings in June and the association of the modern Honeymoon.

Mead, also called honey wine, is produced by fermenting a solution of honey and water. Mead is known from many sources of ancient history throughout Europe, Africa, and Asia, although its origins are lost in prehistory.

Archaeologists in Northern China have found evidence of honey-based fermented beverages dating from about 9000 b.c. Some maintain that mead is as old as civilization itself. Anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss suggested that the invention of mead marks a critical passage in human evolution, the transition "from nature to culture,". We know that Pharaohs drank mead and in Norse mythology, Odin gained his power and wisdom from magic mead. It's Praises are sung in the Sanskrit hymns of the Rig-Veda. Aristotle extolled its virtues in Meterologica; the Aztecs and Incas both used it in their religious festivals. Throughout the ages, across the globe, mead has been celebrated as a source of health and happiness, of strength and inspiration, the preferred drink of poets and scholars, warriors and royalty.

# Celebration Ideas

This cycle reminds us that we need the blossom to bear fruit.

- Make moon water.
- Infuse water (moon water, sun water, or any water) with strawberries.
- Make berry jam.
- make strawberry sun tea.
- Make and eat strawberry shortcakes.
- Have a tea party to celebrate the full moon.
- Go berry picking.
- Learn about bees and native pollinators.
- make mead.
- Make honey foods and drinks.
- Make rose salve, infused oil, or hydrosol.

## Sources

Sophia Center for Goddess Study Priestess Training Class handouts by Dr. Candace Kant, Professor of History

Full Moon Feast: Food and the Hunger for Connection by Jessica Prentice

Stepping Into Ourselves: An anthology of Writings on Priestesses by Anne Key & Candace Kant

The Old Farmer's Almanac

...and various other sources collect over 20 years. Some are printed, some are handwritten, while others are scribbled on a napkin. I've had many teachers over the years and many of my biggest inspirations came from simple conversations and gatherings rather than formal lessons or rituals. Because of this, I may not always have every source of information but if you recognize something, I would be happy to include and/or link to the original source.