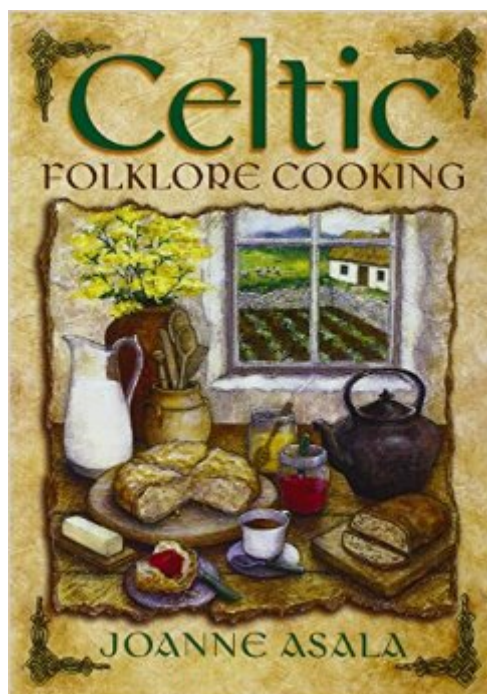


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Celtic Folklore Cooking



Synopsis

A treasury of delectable recipes, *Celtic Folklore Cooking* by Joanne Asala will help you select foods to serve at your celebrations of the Sabbats and Esbats: the festivals and ritual times for Witches and Wiccans. It is also a terrific introduction to Celtic culture. The recipes in this book were gathered during four trips the author took to Ireland and Britain, as well as visits to Scotland and Wales. She searched for people who still cooked in the traditional of their ancestors, passing down recipes from generation to generation. The result is a book that is rich in Celtic tradition. And the foods are delicious any time, too! Like a well-stocked larder, *Celtic Folklore Cooking* offers plenty of tempting choices for daily meals or special celebrations. Pick from more than 200 tasty traditional dishes, all nestled among colorful food-related proverbs, poems, tales, customs, and other nuggets of folk wisdom. Each recipe lists ancient and modern holidays associated with the dish so you can select the perfect fare to complement the season. Recipes include: - Mushroom and Scallop Pie - Heather Wine - Pratie Oaten - Beestings Pancakes - Hot Cross buns - Figgy Pudding - Boxy on the Griddle - Barm Brack - Sweet Scones - Scotch Eggs - Colcannon - Cockle Soup - Flower Pudding - Flummery - Mead The ancient Celts celebrated their Sabbats with music, dance, games, food, and drink. Whether you are a solitary practitioner or a part of a larger group, food and drink should always be a part of your festivities, rituals, and ceremonies. This book can be the key to a wide variety of foods that will make you the talk of the town! If you are involved in Celtic traditions, this book is a must. If you simply like unique recipes for foods that are as tasty today as they were hundreds, even thousands of years ago, you'll want this book, too.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I'll say right off the bat that this will be a book you'll either love or hate. There isn't another cookbook quite like it, so it's really hard to make comparisons. I personally think it's terrific, and my coven has used it on a number of occasions. We've had good luck with the citrus curd, crescent moon rolls, soda bread, tea brack, and baked trout among others. Yum! Asala has taken on the gargantuan task of suggesting traditional Celtic dishes for the festivals of the wheel of the year: Beltane, Samhain, Yule, etc. Some of these dishes do stem from the earliest days of recorded history, others are obviously more recent in origin, so a purist may find it inappropriate to call this a "pagan" cookbook. Still, all religions, even reconstructionist neo-paganism, are fluid in nature and are constantly changing. What's important is the "now." You may still observe the "old" holidays by using "modern" Irish recipes. The recommendations are Asala's own, and I feel they have a lot of merit. She has also managed to distill a lot of other information into one convenient format. The proverbs and songs, especially, can be found in a dozen different collections. But I think she has presented them in a new way by placing them with recipes that they enhance. For example, if one of the recipes has "milk" as the main ingredient, she has linked it with a proverb about cows or milking or added a bit of folklore about cows. So I consider this book as a good jumping off point into Celtic mythology and culinary history. If you want to learn just about the foods, find a book that is strictly a cookbook. If you want to learn more about folk sayings, check out an old proverb collection or poetry book like *Carmina Gadelica*.

'Celtic Folklore Cooking' by culinary writer and folklorist, JoAnne Asala of Chicago is truly unique among the 500 some cookbooks I have reviewed over the last two and a half years. The only books that come close to it in combining spiritual and culinary worlds are the books on Jewish Holiday cooking. In some ways, Ms. Asala's book deals with things which are less alive today than the very active world of Judaism, since virtually no one except wannabe witches or druids make the lore in this book a part of their everyday life. But, that glib summary of our Celtic heritage today ignores two strong influences where Celtic lore still works on our psyches from behind centuries of misty influence. The first and more subtle influence is the effect of Celtic lore on the placing of our Christian holidays. Practically every single Christian and Secular holiday, including Christmas, Easter, Halloween, Thanksgiving, Carnavale / Marti Gras, Lent, and Advent can be traced to the mapping of Christian doctrine onto the pre-existing Celtic agricultural calendar. One can almost feel

the palpable shadow of great Stonehenge, that early instrument for tracking that calendar, weighing on our imagination on Spring, Midsummer, Autumn, and Midwinter celebrations. While it is quite beyond the scope of this book and this review, one can wonder how the Celts in the damp north influenced the Greek and Roman based early Christianity, but it obviously did, in no small way. The second great influence is more obvious today than it may have been for over a century.

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