

May you enjoy this time of the Longest Day and appreciate the power and possibilities of the Element Fire!

Celebrating Fire

By Liz Fisher

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196 Shares



The Summer Solstice occurs this week. The longest day of the year marks one of the most significant turning points in the Earth's Wheel of the Year.

Throughout the summer, festivals, open air concerts, beach parties and vacation travel bring us into contact with others. We gather with strangers who hold the same interests and passions as we have, at least to some degree.

The earliest sunrises of the year in either hemisphere always come before the Summer Solstice. The exact date of your earliest sunrise depends on your latitude, but the sequence on Summer Solstice is always the same: earliest sunrise, latest sunset.

This is a time for the out-of-doors. Whenever possible, many of us leave behind the humanly contrived places, the built environment, and choose

to be in the organic world of nature: plants, trees and all manner of animals. If we are lucky, we find a safe place to build a campfire.

Hawthorne is a tree associated with fire. It announces hope, gladness and celebration. A healer of the heart, this is a tree of joyous festivities, the marriage of love and life in action – perhaps after a period of inaction, restraint, self-denial, reflection.



Fire

Fire is associated with a wide range of possibilities. While all of the elements have both creative, nurturing qualities and destructive possibilities, for me fire is the most dramatic. Think enthusiasm verses raging anger. Imagine artistic fire cracker displays rather than burning buildings. One offers amazing thrills, the other brings terror.

When paying attention to how the element fire operates within our lives and our consciousness, both on a spiritual and emotional level, our perceptions expand. We begin to see the infinite possibilities for new growth created by the fires of life's experiences. It is important to remember that forest fires also support new growth, further illustrating the link between destructive and regenerative energies in nature.



Fire can stimulate greater understanding of our own creative life force. This assists us in awakening, developing, and controlling kundalini energy which we carry within us. This energy rises from the base of our spines, up through the chakra centers engaging the varied aspects of being alive in the world.

Varied cultural expressions that honor fire and the sun take place around the world. Here are several to spark appreciation for this element.

Pele

Pele (She-Who-Shapes-the-Sacred-Land) is the fire volcano goddess of Hawaii. She is featured in the course that I authored and edited *Rise Up & Call Her Name: A Woman-honoring Journey into Global Earth-based Spiritualities*.



In the earth's mantle, a deep-seated source of heat melts the rocks around it. This fluid rock, called magma, then rises through the overlying crust to produce the volcanoes. Magma that flows from volcanoes over the surface of the Earth is called *lava*.

Successions of lava flows make the land a tapestry of change. Expanses of stone that seem as lifeless as the moon give way suddenly. This flower, 'ōhi'a lehua, appears on lava less than a year old. Its scarlet blossoms are sacred to Pele, a testimony to Pele's regenerative nature.



When researching Pele, I discovered the work of several native Hawaiian artists. In ancient times, Pele did not have an icon associated with her. These artists have managed to give Pele a visual presence which combines the mystery and the visionary qualities of this powerful natural fire that resides within the Earth herself.



Phoenix



For those of us who respect the symbolism of Asian folklore, particularly during 2017, the element fire is prominent. We are a third of the way through the Chinese Year of the Phoenix ([see my February 2017 column](#)).

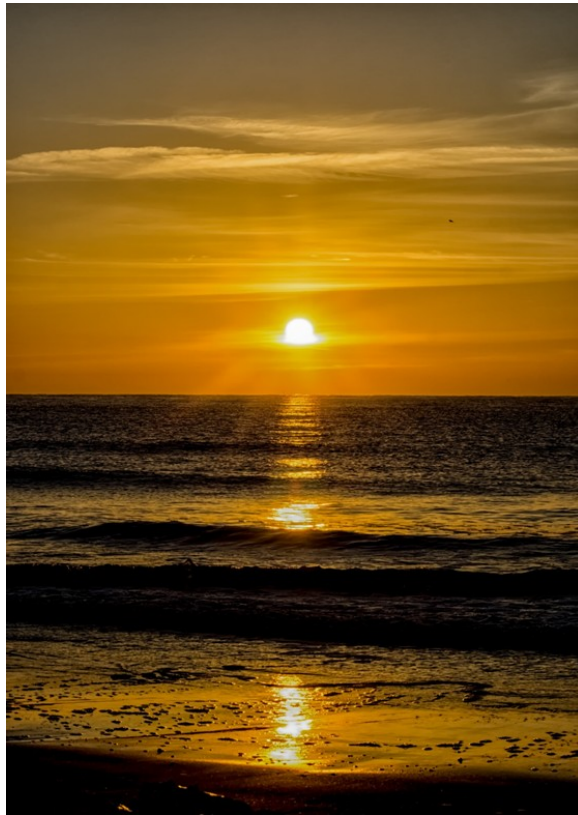
Overcoming obstacles is associated with the power of the Phoenix, who rose from the ashes. Healing, new awareness and a

stepping forward with confidence are fire qualities and the powers available when the Phoenix rises up. This is good to remember as we continue on the journey of social and political challenges facing us.

Many of the great megalithic stone circles, such as Stonehenge, are oriented to sunrise at the Summer Solstice. As this is common throughout Europe and indeed, throughout the Northern Hemisphere, this suggests that the Summer Solstice was very important to cultures long before the time of the Celts. Large crowds now gather at Stonehenge to celebrate this sacred day of the year.



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The Sacred Dimensions: South/Fire Dance by Lynn Carol Henderson, used by permission

Fudge-like Lava, photo by Allyson Rickard, on location in Hawaii, 1993, from Rise Up & Call Her Name video

Sacred Blossom, less than a year after volcanic eruption, photo by Allyson Rickard, on location in Hawaii, 1993, from Rise Up & Call Her Name video

Pele, Goddess of Hawaii's Volcanoes by Herb Kawainui Kane, from Rise Up & Call Her Name video

Pele (spruce, lauhala leaves, ceramic) by Rocky Jensen, a Native Hawaiian, used by permission

Phoenix Rising from Flames, public domain

Stonehenge at the Start of the Shortest Night, Taken on June 20, 2007. Created by Alex Clark – Free to share, copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/2.0/>

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