

Missa's Urban Home

BTR Show Prep for 3/21/2010

Vernal Equinox & Easter

Greeting	I'm Missa Dixon And this is Missa's Urban Home on Blog Talk Radio The show where we are changing lives one extraordinary topic at a time.
Today's show	Today's show is my continued focus of holidays. I'll be sharing my ideas about how to celebrate the Vernal Equinox and Easter.
Weather	Sunny crisp cool spring morning.
Foo Dog Mafia	Oh yea I do have the squeaky toy.
Thankful Moment	I had a great Mid-South Con last weekend! Great people! Had great panels! Thanks so much for having me and I hope I can come back.
Pointing moment	None
Upcoming Shows	March 26th (Next week) – I have a class next weekend so there will be no show. Got to get all those CEU before the end of the physical year. April 4th – Is Easter – celebrate away. April 11st – Author T.K. Thorne will be here to talk about her first novel <i>Noah's Wife</i> . Her take on ancient life is so wonderful and I can't wait to interview her.

Topic Questions:

Vernal Equinox & Easter

All today's information can be found on many different web sites all over the web.

Vernal Equinox

- ⊗ Also called the March Equinox, Northward Equinox, Vernal Point, First point.
- ⊗ March 20th @ 1:32pm EST
- ⊗ Far from being an arbitrary the vernal Equinox is very significant for astronomical reasons.
 - It marks the exact time the Sun crosses directly over the Earth's equator. This moment is known as the vernal equinox in the Northern Hemisphere. For the Southern Hemisphere, this is the moment of the autumnal equinox.
- ⊗ Equinox means "equal night." Because the Sun is positioned above the equator, day and night are about equal in length all over the world during the equinoxes.
- ⊗ Vernal means spring.
- ⊗ Reasons why the equinox is so important:
 - There is a 23.4 degree tilt of the Earth's axis. Because of this tilt, we receive the Sun's rays most directly in the summer. In the winter we are tilted away from the Sun and the rays pass through the atmosphere at a greater slant, bringing lower temperatures. When the Earth rotated on its axis perpendicular to the plane of the Earth's orbit around the Sun, there was no variation in day lengths or temperatures throughout the year, and we had no seasons.

Celebrations

- ⊗ Neopagan celebration is Ostara.
 - Depending on the tradition:
 - A festival celebrating rejoining of the Goddess and her consort, who has spent the winter months in death.
 - The young God regaining strength in his youth after being born at Yule, and the old Goddess remade into her Maiden aspect.

- The light half of the year. Marks the time where the days will be longer than the nights.
- Pagan Symbols of Ostara:
 - Eggs – fertility, rebirth, circle of life.
 - Rabbits – fertility, rebirth.
 - Spring Flowers – the return of the sun.
- Foods served on Ostara:
 - Most pagan events are pot luck but dishes should include.
 - Eggs, spring/late winter crops lettuces, spinach, over wintered carrots, young teas, lamb, hot crossed buns.
 - Larger events will more than likely include vegetarian and non-vegetarian meals.
- Activities on Ostara:
 - Egg decorating (be warned the color of your eggs has meaning so look that up before you let you son color his egg black.
 - Making magical items for fertility of your crops.
 - Plant seeds on this day. (Make sure they are hardy enough to go into the ground or plant them in the house and take them out when your climate allows.
 - Pick spring flowers for your alter and table.

✿ Japan

- The equinox is a national holiday where the family is celebrated.
 - Many go to family grave plots to celebrate the ancestors.
 - Also family reunions are held this day.

✿ Zoroastrian faith

- Celebrate the first day of their new year.

✿ Zowruz

- A festival held all of near Asia. Started in the Persian Empire – it is their new year! It is marked by the Sun leaving Pisces and entering Aries.
- Highlighted by spring cleaning, making new clothing and visiting friends and family.
- There is a traditional table set called *Half Seen*. This is set with different items deepening on what traditions the house follows. Mostly foods, plants, candles, decorated eggs, live fish, and coins.
- Also children do a type of trick or treat on this day, covering themselves up and banging pans together in the streets begging for treats.

Passover

- ✿ This year March 30th - April 6th.
 - The eight-day festival of Passover is celebrated in the early spring, from the 15th through the 22nd of the Hebrew month of Nissan.
- ✿ Marks the time when the last plague came over Egypt killing the first born in the entire kingdom. God “passed over” the children of Israel sparing them the death that the first male children of the Egyptians suffered.
- ✿ Celebrations include of feast called Seders that center on the family unit.
 - Matza, Bitter herbs, wine, are food eaten at the Seders.
 - The story of the Exodus is told at these meals to pass on the tradition to the next generations.
 - Restrictions: you can’t eat any fermented (called chametz) during this time.
 - Spring cleaning is to be done before the first night of Passover.
 - Food is eaten ritually.

Easter

- ✿ This year Easter is April 4th.
 - The first Sunday after the first full moon after the spring equinox.
 - Always between March 22nd and April 25th.
- ✿ Celebrates Jesus rise from the dead three days after being crucified by the Romans. He had been accused of blasphemy.
- ✿ Biggest holiday in the Christian calendar.
- ✿ Symbols of Easter:
 - Bunnies: Was derived from Pagan events around Easter. Brought to America by the Germans.
 - Chicks: Symbol of rebirth.
 - Easter Eggs:
 - Also a Pagan tradition symbolizing new life for spring. This was a natural due to the fact that Easter is about renew of the spirit through the resurrections of the Christ.
 - Eggs used to be forbidden during the Lent season so as soon as the restriction was lifted everybody really wanted an egg or two.
 - Candy: This seems to be an American thing. Chocolate eggs, and Jelly Beans are very popular but Peeps were brought here by a Russian named Sam Born in the 1920’s.

- Easter Lily: the whit of the lily is to represent Christ and the purity of new life.
- New brightly colored Easter outfit symbolizing new life.
- ⊗ Religious observances:
 - Most Christians do celebrate Easter.
 - Going to church often at sunrise.
 - Baptisms.
 - The Eucharist.
 - Feasting.
 - Lighting candles.
 - Spring plays, pageants, carnivals.
 - Easter egg hunts.
- ⊗ Easter Foods:
 - Hard-boiled eggs, Hot Cross Buns, Roast Lamb, Ham

Current American Traditions

- Easter did not become a big holiday in the U.S. until after the civil war.
- White House Easter egg role. Started by Rutherford B. Hayes in 1878 the first Monday after Easter.
- Mardi Gras is held the weeks before Lent.
- Painting Eggs.
- Easter Parades: Started in the 1870's New Yorkers wanted to show off their new Easter outfits so they would stroll down the main streets seeing and being seen.
- Easter basket for kids filled with goodies such as candy and small toys.