



ABITHA'S APOTHECARY

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How to Make Pokeberry Ink

September 2016

Pokeweed is a purplish-red berry found in many parts of North America. In the Midwest and most northern states, it blooms in early fall, typically around mid-September -- just in time for Mabon. The poisonous red berries can be used to provide ink for writing - legend has it that the Declaration of Independence may have been drafted in pokeweed ink, although the final version that sits in the National Archives was done in iron-gall ink.



Many letters written by soldiers during the Revolutionary and Civil Wars, because it was something that was readily available -- pokeweed grows over many parts of the country. According to the Ohio State University, pokeweed berries get their name from a Native American word for blood, owing to the color of the juice. Legend holds that tribal shamans used pokeweed berries to rid the body of evil spirits - probably because ingestion led to copious vomiting and diarrhea.

With a little bit of work, you can make your own pokeweed ink to use in magical workings, particularly those used in banishing spells. The ink seems to be sensitive to sunlight and browns when exposed to UV rays, so if you're going to store it, use a dark-colored bottle or store it in a cabinet out of the light.



Warning: the entire plant is toxic to humans, so don't try to eat them!

You'll need:

- 2 Cups pokeweed berries
- 1 tsp vinegar
- A glass jar or bottle



Mash the berries into a pulp in a small strainer over your jar. This will allow the juice to seep into the jar while the skins and seeds of the berries remain behind. Crush the berries as much as you can.

Once you have the juice in the jar, add the vinegar and mix thoroughly. This will help thin the ink enough to use it in a fountain pen, as well as preventing spoilage.

Use a quill or calligraphy pen to write or inscribe spells and incantations during magical workings. The ink really does have the bright pinkish-purple shade that you see in the photos! Be sure to cap the jar when not in use.

*Note: Some people recommend adding a dash of salt to the ink, or boiling the juice, but so far I've not found either of these steps necessary. Experiment a little and see what you can do!



Harvest Moon: September's Full Moon

September brings us the Harvest Moon, sometimes referred to as the Wine Moon or the Singing Moon. This is the time of year when the last of the crops are being gathered from the fields and stored for the winter. There's a chill in the air, and the earth is slowly beginning its move towards dormancy as the sun pulls away from us.

It's the season when we're celebrating Mabon, the autumn equinox.

Correspondences

Colors: Browns and greens, earth tones

Gemstones: Citrine, chrysolite, peridot, bloodstone

Trees: Bay, larch, hawthorn

Gods: Demeter, Brigid, Freyja, Vesta

Herbs: Wheat, valerian, witch hazel, skullcap

Element: Earth



This is a month of hearth and home. Spend some time preparing your environment for the upcoming chilly months. If you don't already have one, set up a hearth or kitchen altar for those times when you're cooking, baking and canning. Use this time to clear out clutter—both physical and emotional—before you have to spend the long winter days inside.

Classes & Events

September

- 6th Psychic Shielding & Defense
7:30p \$10
- 14th Altar Class
7:30p \$10
- 18th Leather Mask Making
6:00pm \$35
- 24th Mabon Ritual
8:00p Free
- 21st Creating Magical Tools
7:30p \$10
- 25th Pagan Pride Day
Bataan Park 9-5
- 27th Grounding & Centering
7:30p \$10

October

- 4th Crystal Ball & Scrying 101
7:30p \$10
- 6th Runes 101
7:30p \$10
- 8th Psychic Fair
11-7p
- 12th Mirror Magic
7:30p \$10
- 13th Runes 201
7:30p \$10
- 20th Runes 301
7:30p \$10
- 26th Prayer Circle
7:30p Free
- 30th Samhain Ritual
3pm Free

How to Tarot Workshop will be offered again Jan. 8th, 2017

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!!!

If there is a class you are interested, sign up and tell your friends about it so they can sign up too. Most classes have a minimum attendance and all have a max.



The New Moon and Solar Eclipse on September 1 are all yours. Exert your personal power in a gentle way. People will bend over backward to please you. Be reasonable. Any conflict will go your way, but it won't be forgotten. The delicate tendrils of love reach into your world during the September 16 Full Moon (and Lunar Eclipse). You may be in the mood to be charmed and tempted, but after a while only real love will suffice. The September 30 New Moon could bring a money matter into better balance. You'll have a clearer, more complete view of a financial situation.

The New Moon and Solar Eclipse on September 1 give you the secret superpowers of charm and persuasion. Tactfully straighten out a financial matter or some other material tug of war. Look great no matter what you do. Midmonth, pay more attention to your health. If not feeling right, check it out. Eat well and rest. Refrain from heroic efforts 24/7, especially socially. The New Moon on September 30 is lucky in a zillion unexpected ways. Keep expectations low and be pleasantly surprised. Control the impulse to be overly generous. Practice the fine art of graciously receiving.



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MOON CYCLE

- New Moon Sept 1st 3:03 am
- First Quarter Sept 9th 5:48am
- Full Moon Sept 16th 1:05pm
- Last Quarter Sept 23rd 3:56pm
- New Moon Sept 30th 6:11pm

How To Hold a Mabon Apple Harvest Rite

Mabon, the Autumn Equinox, is celebrated in many ways around the world. It is a day of balance, with equal amounts of darkness and light, but soon, winter will arrive. In some Wiccan traditions, it marks the time when the Sun King descends into the underworld, from which he will be reborn at Yule.

In many pantheons, the apple is a symbol of the Divine. Apple trees are representative of wisdom and guidance. This apple ritual will allow you time to thank the gods for their bounty and blessings, and to enjoy the magic of the earth before the winds of winter blow through.

Decorate your altar with symbols of the season -- a basket of gourds or small pumpkins, colorful fall leaves, acorns, vines, grapes or blackberries. You'll also need a pair of orange candles to symbolize the harvest, a cup of cider or wine, and an apple. Although this ritual is designed for a solitary practitioner, you can easily adapt it into a group ritual setting.

If your tradition requires you to cast a circle, do so now.

Light your harvest candles. Face the altar and hold the apple in both hands. If you can do this rite outside, raise the apple up to the sky, and feel the wisdom and energy of the gods coming to you. Say:

The apple is sacred, a symbol of the gods, and holds the knowledge of the ancients inside. Tonight I ask the gods to bless me with their wisdom.

Say:

Five points in a star, hidden inside. One for earth, one for air, one for fire, one for water, and the last for spirit.

Next, turn to the south and say:

I call upon the wise ones, the ancient gods, as the sun moves away and fire fades, to be replaced with the chill of the night.

Finally, face west, and say:

I will reflect on the guidance of the

gods, and let the cool autumn rains wash over me, cleansing my heart and soul.

Raise the cup of wine or cider to the sky, and toast the gods. Say:

The wild god returns this night to the belly of the Mother. The mother goddess tonight becomes the Crone.

As the Wheel of the Year turns, the earth dies a bit each day. I willingly follow the old gods into the darkness, where they will watch over me, protect me, and keep me safe.

Sip from the cup, and as you drink your wine or cider, think about the power and energy of the Divine, in whatever aspect you choose to honor.

Extinguish one of the candles, and say:

The wild god has gone to rest in the Underworld. I look to the darkness for renewal and rebirth.

