

THE SACRED CALENDAR

*An Ecological-Contemplative Year
for Northern California*



Grounded in the rhythms of this land
And interfaith traditions

April 2026 – March 2027

Quick Reference: The Year at a Glance

The sacred year begins April 1 with the Season of Emergence, as the rains end and the land erupts into life. Five seasons follow the rhythms of this California land, woven with observances from Celtic, Jewish, Christian, Buddhist, and African traditions.

Season	Dates	Element	Ecology	Theme	Key Dates
1. EMERGENCE (NEW YEAR)	Apr 1 – Jun 20	Wood / East	Wildflowers, last rains, blossoms, green hills	Awakening, vision, bodhicitta, intention	Apr 1: New Year Apr 1-9: Passover Apr 5: Easter May 1: Beltane/Vesak Jun 3: Yoruba New Year
2. RIPENING	Jun 21 – Jul 31	Fire / South	Golden hills, stone fruit, solstice, berries	Joy, radiance, community, celebration	Jun 21: Summer Solstice Jul 1: Dharma Day Jul 22: Tisha B'Av
3. DEEPENING FIRE	Aug 1 – Oct 21	Earth / Center	Fire season, grape harvest, apples, acorns	Integration, harvest, groundedness, gratitude	Aug 1: Lughnasadh Sep 11-13: Rosh Hashanah Sep 21: Yom Kippur Sep 22: Equinox Sep 25-Oct 2: Sukkot
4. FIRST WATERS	Oct 22 – Dec 31	Water / North	First rains, salmon return, mushrooms, solstice	Descent, receptivity, ancestors, thinning veil	Oct 31: Samhain Nov 2: Día de los Muertos Dec 4-12: Hanukkah Dec 8: Bodhi Day Dec 21: Winter Solstice Dec 25: Christmas Dec 26: Kwanzaa
5. DREAMING	Jan 1 – Mar 31	Deep Water / NE	Heavy rains, whale migration, dormancy, first blossoms	Gestation, dreams, shadow work, rest	Jan 6: Epiphany Feb 1: Imbolc Feb 15: Parinirvana Mar 20: Spring Equinox

The Ground We Stand On

This calendar emerges from a recognition: we are spiritual orphans longing for home. Our ancestors lived in deep relationship with land and season, with the seen and unseen worlds. That thread has been broken for many of us—but it can be rewoven.

Core Values

Direct relationship with the natural world. We practice reciprocity and connection with nature and the spirit imbued in nature.

The world is animate and ensouled. Full of presences that influence us as we are part of their system. Nature communicates with us directly through communion.

Sacred technologies for transformation. We use plant medicine, silent meditation, movement, song, and poetry as technologies for engaging the subtle realms.

Darkness and descent are necessary. The seed germinates underground. The soul is forged in difficulty. Descent is as sacred as ascent.

The purpose of practice is realization, healing, and alignment. We practice to realize interdependence, heal the wounds of separation, and live in alignment with Essence. This is the Bodhisattva path: awakening for the sake of all beings.

Three Worlds, One Reality

Nirmāṇakāya — The Physical Realm. Bodies, land, seasons, this breath, this watershed.

Saṃbhogakāya — The Spirit Realm. Ancestors, plant teachers, essential qualities as presences, the beings of the Otherworld.

Dharmakāya — The Absolute. The boundless ground from which all arises. Formless awareness. What was never born and cannot die.

These are not separate places. They are dimensions of here. Ceremony is the art of living in all three at once.

The Five Seasons

The new year begins in April, as the rains end and the land erupts into its fullest expression of life. This aligns with Passover and liberation, the spring equinox traditions found across cultures, and the Buddhist celebration of Vesak.

1. Season of Emergence — THE NEW YEAR

April 1 – June 20, 2026 | Element: Wood | Direction: East

Ecological Markers

Last rains tapering off. Wildflower explosion—poppies, lupine, buttercups at peak. Hills impossibly green. Migrating birds returning. Bees active. Plum, cherry, apple blossoms.

Spiritual Contemplation / Theme

Awakening, aspiration, energy rising, vision. The Wood element governs vision, planning, benevolent assertion. Bodhicitta arising—the thrust toward awakening. *This is the season of new beginnings, liberation, and setting forth.*

Clarifying intention: What wants to grow through you? Visioning practices, journaling.

Bodhicitta: The wildflowers do not bloom for themselves. Cultivating compassion.

Energy management: Wood shadow is anger, blocked creativity. Liver cleansing, forgiveness work, movement.

Observances

NEW YEAR’S DAY	Wednesday, April 1	Threshold ritual. Releasing the old, setting intention for the new.
Wildflower Pilgrimage	Late April	Walking meditation in wildflower fields. Pure perception practice.
Beltane	Friday, May 1	Celtic: Calan Mai. Fire ceremony. Celebrating creativity, union.

Corresponding Traditions

Holiday	Date	Tradition	Themes
Passover	April 1–9	Jewish	Liberation from Egypt. Seder. Freedom, crossing thresholds.
Easter	April 5	Christian	Resurrection. Death and rebirth. New life after descent.
Theravada New Year	April 13–15	Buddhist	Water festivals, cleansing, renewal.

Vesak / Buddha Day	May 1–4	Buddhist	Birth, enlightenment, death of Buddha.
Lag BaOmer	May 5–6	Jewish	End of mourning, bonfires, celebration.
Shavuot	May 21–23	Jewish	Receiving Torah. First fruits. Revelation.
Pentecost	May 24	Christian	Descent of Holy Spirit. Tongues of fire.
Yoruba New Year	June 3	African (Yoruba)	Year 10,068. Ifá Festival. Honoring Ọrúnmilà.

2. Season of Ripening

June 21 – July 31, 2026 | Element: Fire | Direction: South

Ecological Markers

Grasses turning gold (golden hills emerge). Stone fruit ripening—cherries, apricots, peaches. Summer solstice. Fog belt active on coast. Berry season. Long days, short nights.

Spiritual Contemplation / Theme

Radiance, expression, connection, celebration. Fire element governs heart, joy, communion. The longest days invite us outward into relationship and community.

Joy and celebration: Essential joy as quality of being, not dependent on circumstances.

Sangha, community: Summer is for being with others. The fire that warms when shared.

Beauty and impermanence: The fruit is ripe for days, not weeks. Practice with preciousness.

Observances

Summer Solstice	Sunday, June 21	Celtic: Alban Hefin. Community gathering. Stay up for sunset and sunrise.
First Fruits Offering	June–July	Bringing first fruits to altar. Offering before eating. Gratitude.

Corresponding Traditions

Holiday	Date	Tradition	Themes
Asalha Puja	July 1	Buddhist	Buddha’s first sermon. Turning of the wheel of Dharma.
Tisha B’Av	July 22–23	Jewish	Mourning destruction of Temples. Grief as sacred.
Sango Festival	July/August	African (Yoruba)	Honoring Sango, Orisha of thunder. Fire rituals.

3. Season of Deepening Fire / Late Summer

August 1 – October 21, 2026 | Element: Earth | Direction: Center

Ecological Markers

Peak fire season. Grapes ripening, wine harvest. Apple harvest. Acorns maturing. Tomato and pepper abundance. Autumnal equinox. First cooling at night. Waiting for rain.

Spiritual Contemplation / Theme

Harvest, integration, storing, preparing. Earth element governs center, nourishment, groundedness. Gathering what has ripened. Abundance but also vigilance—fire season requires attention.

Integration: What has this year grown? Gathering fruits of inner work.

Nourishment and generosity: Feeding others, being fed, metabolizing experience.

Groundedness amidst uncertainty: Fire season brings real danger. Equanimity with fear.

Completion and gratitude: Acknowledging dependence on forces beyond our control.

Observances

Lughnasadh	Saturday, August 1	Celtic: Calan Awst. Honoring craftsmanship. First grain offering.
Autumn Equinox	Tuesday, September 22	Celtic: Alban Elfed. Harvest altar. Day of balance. Gratitude feast.
Fire Tending Days	Throughout	Clearing brush. Merit to firefighters, burned lands, displaced creatures.
Rain Watching	October	The waiting time. Watching sky, smelling for petrichor.

Corresponding Traditions

Holiday	Date	Tradition	Themes
Obon	August 13–15	Buddhist (Japanese)	Honoring ancestors. Visiting graves. The dead return.
Osun-Osogbo	Late August	African (Yoruba)	UNESCO event. Osun goddess of fertility. Sacred grove.
Rosh Hashanah	September 11–13	Jewish	Jewish New Year. Introspection. Shofar. Apples and honey.
Yom Kippur	September 20–21	Jewish	Day of Atonement. Fasting, prayer, forgiveness.
Sukkot	September 25 – October 2	Jewish	Festival of Booths. Impermanence. Dependence on land.

Simchat Torah	October 3–4	Jewish	Rejoicing with Torah. Completion of annual reading.
Olojo Festival	October	African (Yoruba)	Ancient festival at Ile-Ife. Ogun. Sacred Aare crown.

4. Season of First Waters

October 22 – December 31, 2026 | Element: Water | Direction: North

Ecological Markers

First significant rains. Salmon and steelhead returning. Mushroom emergence. Oak leaves falling, acorns on ground. Nights lengthening toward solstice.

Spiritual Contemplation / Theme

Descent, return, dissolution, receptivity. The land exhales. Water returns to creeks; salmon bring ocean nutrients back to forest. *This is the great turning inward.*

Receptivity and earthing: Letting go into ground. Fixed structures of self soften.

Ancestral remembrance: Salmon return to birthplace to give life through death. Altar work, grief rituals. The veil is thin.

Observances

First Rain Ceremony	When rains arrive	Receive rain on skin. Threshold marking the descent.
Samhain / Calan Gaeaf	October 31 – November 1	Celtic: Veil thinnest. Ancestor work, divination.
Salmon Return Feast	November (Full Moon: Nov 5)	Community meal. Ancestor altar. Storytelling from lineage.
Winter Solstice	Monday, December 21	Celtic: Alban Arthan. Longest night. All-night sitting.

Corresponding Traditions

Holiday	Date	Tradition	Themes
All Saints' Day	November 1	Christian	Honoring all saints. Communion across death.
Día de los Muertos	November 2	Mexican	Praying for dead. Altars (ofrendas). Dead visit.
Advent Begins	November 29	Christian	Four weeks waiting. Darkness before light.
Hanukkah	December 4–12	Jewish	Festival of Lights. Light in darkness. Perseverance.
Bodhi Day	December 8	Buddhist	Buddha's enlightenment. Awakening in darkness.
Christmas	December 25	Christian	Birth of Christ. Light enters at darkest time.
Kwanzaa	December 26 – January 1	African American	Seven Principles: Unity, Self-determination, Collective Work, Economics, Purpose, Creativity, Faith.

5. Season of Dreaming

January 1 – March 31, 2027 | Element: Deep Water | Direction: North/Northeast

Ecological Markers

Heaviest rains, fullest creeks. Gray whale migration along coast. Newts crossing roads. Bare vines, dormant orchards. First almond blossoms at season's end.

Spiritual Contemplation / Theme

Gestation, inner work, dreams, the unconscious. Land is saturated. Seeds underground doing invisible work. Season of interiority, not-yet-manifest potential.

Stillness and potential: Like seeds ready to germinate. Resting in not-knowing.

Dream practice and shadow work: Boundary between inner and outer is thin. Dreams become vivid.

Deep rest: Not laziness but participation in dormancy. The culture says produce; the land says wait.

Observances

Whale Moon	Full Moon in January	Coastal pilgrimage. Honoring migration, wisdom of great beings.
Imbolc / Brigid's Day	Monday, February 1	Celtic: Gŵyl Fair. Lighting candles. First sign light returns.
Spring Equinox	March 20, 2027	Celtic: Alban Eilir. Equal day and night. Preparing for new year.
Last Rain Gratitude	When rains end	Threshold ritual. Thanking water. Cycle begins again.

Corresponding Traditions

Holiday	Date	Tradition	Themes
Mahayana New Year	January 3	Buddhist	New Year in Mahayana traditions.
Epiphany	January 6	Christian	Magi arrive. Revelation. Following the star.
Orthodox Christmas	January 7	Eastern Orthodox	Birth of Christ (Julian calendar).
Tu B'Shevat	February	Jewish	New Year of Trees. Planting, ecological renewal.
Candlemas	February 2	Christian	Presentation of Jesus. Blessing of candles.
Parinirvana Day	February 15	Buddhist	Buddha's death and final nirvana.
Ash Wednesday	February	Christian	Lent begins. 40 days fasting, prayer. Descent.
Purim	March	Jewish	Deliverance from Haman. Joy, costumes, feasting.
Magha Puja	March 3	Buddhist	Assembly of disciples with Buddha.

The Lunar Rhythm

The solar seasons provide the large structure. The moon provides the monthly rhythm—a smaller cycle of dark and light within each season.

New Moon: Solitary practice, going inward. Intention-setting. Ancestor work, dream work. The dark as fertile, as womb.

Waxing Moon: Building, cultivating, growing. Beginning new projects. Invoking support.

Full Moon: Community time. Gatherings, ceremony, celebration. Offering, gratitude, dedication of merit.

Waning Moon: Release, clearing, letting go. Completing projects. Shadow work.

Named Moons of 2026–2027

Each full moon carries the energy of its season and a contemplative theme for gathering.

Moon Name	Full Moon Date	Season	Themes
Wildflower Moon	April 13, 2026	<i>Emergence</i>	New year intentions, awakening energy, pure perception amid the bloom
Strawberry Moon	May 12, 2026	<i>Emergence</i>	Beltane sweetness, first fruits of practice, bodhicitta ripening
Solstice Moon	June 11, 2026	<i>Emergence/Ripening</i>	Peak radiance, longest light, celebrating before the turn
Golden Hills Moon	July 10, 2026	<i>Ripening</i>	Joy as essential nature, communion, savoring impermanence
Smoke Moon	August 9, 2026	<i>Deepening Fire</i>	Lughnasadh harvest, vigilance, gratitude amid fire season
Grape Moon	September 7, 2026	<i>Deepening Fire</i>	Integration, gathering the fruits, preparing for descent
Harvest Moon	October 7, 2026	<i>Deepening Fire</i>	Sukkot, completion, final harvest before the rains
Salmon Moon	November 5, 2026	<i>First Waters</i>	Ancestral remembrance, the returning, tending the dead
Dreaming Moon	December 4, 2026	<i>First Waters</i>	Stillness, Hanukkah light in darkness, turning inward
Whale Moon	January 3, 2027	<i>Dreaming</i>	Deep wisdom, migration, vast presence passing through
Brigid Moon	February 1, 2027	<i>Dreaming</i>	Imbolc, first stirring, poetry and candlelight

Blossom Moon	March 3, 2027	<i>Dreaming</i>	Equinox approaching, preparing for new year, seeds quickening
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New Moons (for solitary practice)

Month	New Moon Date
April 2026	April 28
May 2026	May 27
June 2026	June 26
July 2026	July 25
August 2026	August 24
September 2026	September 22 (Autumn Equinox)
October 2026	October 21
November 2026	November 20
December 2026	December 20 (near Solstice)
January 2027	January 18
February 2027	February 17
March 2027	March 18

The Braided Traditions

This calendar weaves together multiple wisdom streams. Each brings something essential:

Celtic / Welsh: The fierce particularity of place. The populated spirit realm. The normalcy of darkness. The magic of language.

Buddhist: The three-kaya architecture. Impermanence as lived reality. The Bodhisattva path. The possibility of awakening.

Jewish: The lunisolar calendar. The rhythm of sabbath and festival. Liberation as paradigm. Harvest gratitude. The Days of Awe.

Christian: The liturgical year of descent and resurrection. Advent waiting. Easter rising. The communion of saints.

African (Yoruba): The Orisha as natural forces with personality. The Ifá oracle. The ongoing relationship with ancestors.

African American (Kwanzaa): The Nguzo Saba. Unity, Self-determination, Collective Work, Cooperative Economics, Purpose, Creativity, Faith.

Beginning the Practice

You do not need to observe every festival. Begin where you are. Notice what season it is. Step outside and feel what the land is doing.

The simplest practice is attention: What is happening in the natural world right now? What birds are present? What is blooming or fruiting or dying?

From attention, relationship grows. From relationship, reciprocity. From reciprocity, belonging.



*May this practice bring you home to the land.
May it connect you to those who came before.
May it heal the wounds of separation.
May it serve the awakening of all beings.*