

## History and Mythology of the Labyrinth

The Hopi of North America had a symbol for Mother Earth known today as the 'Classical Seven-Path Labyrinth'. It was a symbol of the Mother which identified the sacred in nature - that spiraling form found throughout nature. Labyrinths were woven into objects to personify man's connection to his source and were often placed at sacred places in nature to remind him of this union. When one walks the labyrinth, it is recreating this very ancient expression of thanks and remembrance of the divine in all things.

### Revelations...

Revelations from nature are a part of humankind's connection to the creative nature of the Universe. Nature can be thought of as a reflection of the laws of creation. In many cultures, from ancient Europe to the Americas, it was considered a rite of passage to have a vision quest - to spend time alone in nature, in a spot chosen by the elders as a sacred place. From this time of solitude and humility, would come a vision. This vision could occur in the form of a bird, whose spirit would teach, or from an animal, a rock, or even the wind and water. Although the guidance came from within their own being, often it was linked to an aspect of nature.

### Ancestors...

Our ancestors knew that the divine in nature was an extension of their own humanity and depended on this relationship to support their very existence. In remembering the lessons of old, we can think of the earth as an extension of our own body. We realize we must care for our natural resources as an extension of ourselves. These lessons teach only to take what is needed and to always give back that which we can.

### Healing...

The Labyrinth is an extension of our desire to co-create with nature. When we consecrate space in nature as sacred, we heal a part of ourself. The earth has the capacity to Heal us just as we have this capacity to heal the earth; it is a symbiotic relationship. In ages past, when people worked closely with the earth, the first and best fruits of the harvest were always returned to the Mother in thanks for her many gifts.

### Gifting...

The Labyrinth is a beautiful form of this gifting process between human and environment -- a precious spiraling pathway uniting us with our natural habitat. The conscious intent of creating this Sacred Space originates in our awareness of the Divine, and how we use the universal language of color, sound, movement, and form, to heal and regenerate our land, ourselves. We reveal ourselves by what we do and say, how we build, paint, and sing. The joy of unveiling the true self, freed of emotional restraints, cannot be surpassed.

## Transcend...

Labyrinths are temples that enhance and balance and bring a sense of the sacred - a place where we can confirm our unity with the cosmos, awaken our vital force, and elevate our consciousness. These structures are space/time temples where we can behold realities that, oddly enough, transcend space and time. The orientation, form, and geometry of a labyrinth have symbolic, as well as spatial, importance. It is a mirror for the divine, a place to behold the beauty in nature.

## Kundalini...

Spiraling inward and out, this serpentine flow is the most generative form of subtle energy. The process of moving through the pathway unwinds this stored energy, releasing, magnifying, and, ultimately, harnessing the flow. Working directly in conjunction with the human energy fields, this spiraling flow interacts with the kundalini energy coiled at the base of our spine, converting the subtle energy into a life force itself. This uncoiling of the kundalini vitalizes us through a process of unfolding both upwards and inwards, an exhalation and in-gathering of energies known as the dance of creation.

## Intent...

Labyrinths are known as sacred gateways and have been found at the entrance of ancient sites around the world. Often located at the center of subtle 'earth energies', these temples enhance, balance, regenerate, and confirm our unity with the cosmos.

## Meditation...

A type of Labyrinth, known as a Mantra, was used as a meditation by Hindu midwives to assist in childbirth, and served as a means of relaxation for the birth canal, another labyrinthine form.

## Spirals...

The spiral is the most generative form of subtle energy. When its coil is unwound, the stored energy is released. The areas where straight ley lines cross, or where underground waters run, are places to build sacred temples, labyrinths. These places are rich in both yin and yang (yin underground water crossing yang energy lines).

The labyrinth resonates to this numinous spiral, the Phi ratio known as the 'Golden Mean', found in all of nature. Labyrinths have always been associated with ancient pilgrimage routes and rituals of self-discovery. They were worn as a form of protection and ornamentation and were often found carved on doorways to bless a dwelling.

## Magic...

Labyrinths are time windows, portals, where time stands still. They are known to facilitate altered states of consciousness, and have parallels with reincarnation, initiation, prosperity, and fertility rites. Ancient Scandinavian sailors believed the labyrinth had magical properties, and, when walked, could control the weather and ensure a good catch.

## Movement...

Many Sacred Dances have taken place within the Labyrinth, such as the "crane" dance recounted in the Greek legend of Theseus and the Minotaur. It is believed that the action of "dancing" a labyrinth magically activates its inherent powers.

## Ancient Temples...

As a universal symbol, the Labyrinth appears throughout history, dating some 4,500 years, and appears cross-culturally over the face of our world, throughout our known history.

## Imagination...

Labyrinths date back to early Crete, Egypt, Peru and India, and were used for ritual walking and spiritual contemplation. Often called 'city of turns', labyrinths were equated with Holy cities such as Troy, Jericho, and Jerusalem.

## Chakras...

Resonating to the vibration of 'seven', the Classical Labyrinth has a direct correlation with the primary Chakras, Tones on the scale, and Colors of the Rainbow.

## The Brain...

Equated with the brain, many cultures believed that the labyrinth could cure illness. Today the labyrinth is known to have a curative effect on certain ailments, by producing a sense of well-being and balance through a type of vestibular stimulation, accessing both left and right hemispheres of the brain.

## Union...

Moving through a Labyrinth changes ordinary ways of perception, connecting the inner and the outer, the right brain and the left brain, the involitional and the evolutionary, through a series of paths that represent the realms of the Gods and Goddesses. These realms are associated with planetary movements, as a process that induces Union with the One.

## Healing and the Labyrinth

The Labyrinth is a container for the creative imagination, to align with our heart's desire. It is a place where we can profoundly, yet playfully, experience our soul's longing and intention.

The Labyrinth is often referred to as a Sacred Path. It is an ancient geometrical pattern based on the circle, which is the universal symbol for wholeness. There are many theories around how a labyrinth has healing effects on a person. One thought is that the symmetrical turns, of clockwise and counter-clockwise, have a balancing effect on the brain. It is interesting to note that spiraling water currents have been known over time to purify that water. Is it possible that the spiraling turns of the labyrinth might be affecting the 70% water in the human body to bring about purification and healing?

Sacred geometry is based on ancient knowledge that was articulated in architectural forms. It is a lost art that developed a balanced and serene climate for the human psyche and soul; perhaps that is why it was used in building many of the cathedrals in ancient Europe. It was thought that by being in the midst of the lawfulness of sacred geometry, one could discover the truth.

"The human spirit, caught within a spinning universe in an ever-confusing flow of events, circumstances and inner turmoil, seeks the truth, and sacred geometry is the key to creating 'an abode of truth'."

Robert Lawler, *'Sacred Geometry, Philosophy and Practice'*