



A Crown of Candles: How to Throw a Fabulous Lucia Party

Joanna Powell Colbert

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Are you interested in celebrating the winter holidays with more meaning, mystery and delight? Let me show you how . . .

Many years ago, I was invited to the legendary Lucia Christmas Parties hosted each December by Helen Farias, creatrix and editor of the original Beltane Papers (one of the first journals of women's spirituality). I had never attended anything like it, where a Christmas party with all its revelry was in full swing, then suddenly interrupted by the arrival of a magical figure with a story to tell and gifts to distribute. She or he then vanished into the dark night. These mysterious appearances brought everyone there closer to a sense of the numinous, an experience sorely lacking in most modern Yuletide festivities. Helen died in 1994, but her parties go on, hosted by friends in Boise, Bellingham, and Seattle.

My spiritual community has continued the tradition every year since 1997 by throwing a large party in St. Lucia's name. We love Lucia because she is a strong, beautiful, female icon of the Christmas season. The sight of her unexpected appearance in the midst of a bustling party, head crowned with blazing candles in the darkened room, never fails to thrill the assembled guests.

Like many of us, you may feel alienated by the commercial Christmas season and disconnected from mainstream religious observances. With this party, you can carry on the ancient tradition of kindling light and fire at the darkest time of the year, while gathering together in community with your family of choice.

I wrote this book to inspire you to create your own celebrations full of mystery, magic and joy!

I've included everything I can think of to ensure a successful Lucia Party of your own, including:

- Scripts for many Magical Giftbringers (like the Holly King, La Befana, and other Numinous Beings — mostly female) who might appear throughout the party.
- Sparkling text for the invitations.
- Suggestions for party activities, like the game of Snapdragon.
- Unusual, enchanting song lyrics and staff music.
- How to choose and prepare the "Lucy Bride."
- How to make a Lucia crown with real candles and fresh greenery.
- How to make the lussekatter (the saffron rolls that Lucia gives to the guests).
- The Sweet Room (a room dedicated to cookies and candies).
- Presentation of the flaming plum pudding.
- Checklists.
- Timelines.
- Menus.
- Mouth-watering recipes.
- "Why We Honor St. Lucia": From Goddess to Saint and Back Again
- And much more!

Even if you don't plan on throwing a Lucia Party, you can use the ideas in this book for other celebrations, rituals and ceremonies.

The book is **full color** on every page, and is **lavishly illustrated** with my own artwork as well as 16 years of photographs of our parties.

Merry Yule!

Joanna Powell Colbert

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