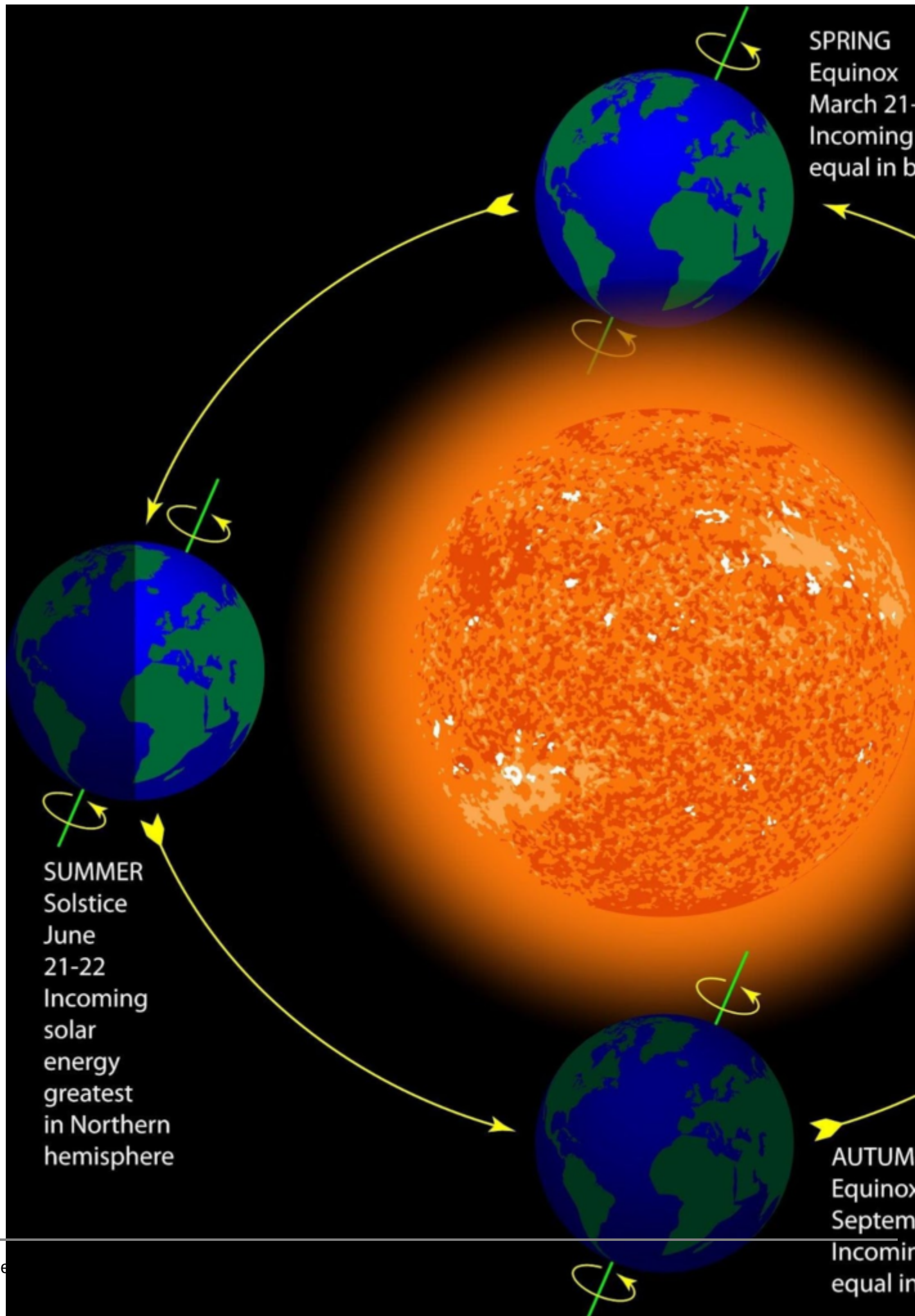




Seasonal Yoga Introduction

Description

Why Do We Experience Seasons?





Seasons are experienced on earth because of the tilt of the earth's axis (not due to distance from the sun).

- The seasons occur as the earth, tilted on its axis, travels around the Sun.
- Because of the Earth's tilt, it orbits the sun on a slant.
- Summer is experienced in the hemisphere tilted toward the sun.
- Winter happens in the hemisphere tilted away from the sun.

More details:

- The tilt stays the same, meaning that the two hemispheres point toward the same position in space throughout the year. However, the two hemispheres point toward or away from the sun at particular times. (timeanddate.com)
- Earth is closest to the sun every year in early January, when it's winter in the Northern Hemisphere.
- When the North Pole is tilted toward the sun, the Northern Hemisphere has Summer Solstice. When the South Pole is tilted toward the sun, the Southern Hemisphere has Summer Solstice.

IF THE EARTH'S AXIS WASN'T TILTED

Because of the [23.4 degree tilt of the Earth's axis], we receive the Sun's rays most directly in the summer. In the winter, when we are tilted away from the Sun, the rays pass through the atmosphere at a greater slant, bringing lower temperatures. If the Earth rotated on an axis perpendicular to the plane of the Earth's orbit around the Sun, there would be no variation in day lengths or temperatures throughout the year, and we would not have seasons. - infoplease, The Rite of Spring

Seasonal Yoga



An intelligent yoga practice encompasses both internal and external alignment. Internallyâ this is about cleaning and reorganizing your internal world so that it becomes a joy to live in the bodyâ Aligning your external circumstances is to position yourself in the centre of time and space, perceiving what is going on outsideâ You use the practice to transcend your personal narrative. Alignment to the seasons is a great way to participate in Natureâs external alchemy. â Kat Villain

- The Sanskrit word for season (âritusâ) comes from âritam,â meaning the âcosmic rhythmâ or the âevolutionary pulse of creation.â (Saul David Raye)
- Honoring the [rhythms of nature](#) honors the flow of our own lives and is an opportunity to be in harmony with all of Life.
- Seasonal Yoga refers to practices attuned to the changing rhythms and energy of the seasons.

Astronomical vs. Meteorological Seasons



Astronomical Seasons

Astronomers and scientists mark the beginning and end of seasons using the dates of equinoxes and solstices:

- Spring â?? Vernal Equinox to Summer Solstice
- Summer â?? Summer Solstice to Autumnal Equinox
- Autumn â?? Autumnal Equinox to Winter Solstice
- Winter â?? Winter Solstice to Vernal Equinox

Meteorological Seasons

Meteorologists divide the year into four seasons of three months each:

Northern Hemisphere

- Spring â?? March 1 through May 31
- Summer â?? June 1 through August 31
- Autumn â?? September 1 through November 30
- Winter â?? December 1 through February 28 or 29

Southern Hemisphere

- Autumn â?? March 1 through May 31
- Winter â?? June 1 through August 31



- Spring – September 1 through November 30
- Summer – December 1 through February 28 or 29

From the Experts

RITAM: COSMIC RHYTHM

The changing of the seasons [is] the flow of life itself. The Sanskrit word for season is *ritu* which comes from the word *ritam*, meaning the cosmic rhythm or the evolutionary pulse of creation. The seasons are a powerful moment in the flow of time and space. It is through them that we measure the flow of our own lives; how many springs, summers, winters and autumns we have. The remembering and honoring of the seasons offers us a chance to come back into harmony with the flow of life and our spirit's journey here on earth. – Saul David Raye

SEASONAL YOGA REVEALS A COSMOS WITHIN OURSELVES

A solar year is measured from Vernal Equinox to Vernal Equinox. It takes Planet Earth approximately three hundred and sixty five days to orbit once around the sun and return to the same point. Our beautiful Earth is wonky, and because it is rotating at an angle we have the different seasons. Working with the Wheel of the year gives us an opportunity to connect with Mother Earth and the subtle energies of her changing seasons.

The sun is a star at the centre of our solar system and all the planets revolve around it. Hatha Yoga teaches us to look within and to discover both the sun and the moon within our own body. Through our yoga practice we learn to balance our solar energy HA, and our lunar energy THA. Our Seasonal Yoga Practice reveals to us a cosmos within ourselves that is a mirror image of the outer cosmos. – Jilly Shipway

OBSERVING WHAT IS HAPPENING, VERIFYING THE SILENT PRESENCE OF THE GROUND

Yoga attuned to the seasons offers a way to heed the body, not to force it, but to lovingly attend to its intimate nature. – An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, and getting in tune with the nature within and surrounding us goes through stages of awareness, signs or symptoms, dreams, fragrances, creaks and squeaks, the shifting of underground currents. Finding a place for observing what is happening, verifying day after day the silent presence of the ground and its unceasing sustenance and support, we encounter a sense of trust, and trust brings the assurance of being able to do what is needed. – Autumn, Winter, Spring, Summer: Yoga Through the Seasons 2008 by Monica Smith in the Introduction

EXTERNAL CYCLES MIRRORED IN THE PHASES OF THE BREATH

External cycles of time – the day, the lunar cycles, the passing of seasons as we circle the sun – are mirrored in the phases of the breath, creating a procession of internal time. – Thus we internalize time itself by observing the flow of breath (time) within the body (space) in a single round of breath, a reflection of the cosmic rhythm. – Shiva Rea



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