



Double Spiral Labyrinth at Stillpoint at Becksides, Bellingham, WA

**Credits:**

Linda Conroy/Stillpoint At Becksides

# Symbolism of the Double Spiral

Early humans had much to contemplate when observing the beauty of spirals in the natural world. Spirals appear on animals such as snails, seashells, and rams' horns and they occur in natural phenomena like whirlpools, tornadoes and spinning galaxies. It is not surprising that the spiral would become a powerful symbol for creation and growth. It is probably the oldest symbol of human spirituality and the most commonly recognized Celtic design motif. It was also one of the earliest known decorations used in art.

The Celtic spiral design appears on a myriad of ancient artifacts, as well as on stone monuments such as Newgrange, in Ireland. It is uncertain what the religious significance was, but it undoubtedly had some connection with the sun, and therefore represents growth, expansion and positive cosmic energy. The double spiral has also been known to represent the equinoxes, when day and night are equal, and is therefore a sign of balance.

In some cultures, the double spiral is a symbol of eternal life. The symbol spirals out infinitely, thus reinforcing the concept of life, death, and rebirth. The whorls represent the continuous creation and destruction of the universe, or the relationship of the finite to the infinite; the never ending spiral of life to death, and back again. The double spiral is related to the yin-yang symbol, which depicts the balance and the interwoven nature of the worldly realm and the spiritual realm.

"Mythology teaches that our universe began with a gigantic roundness. The cosmic egg, the moon, the spiral etc are all attempts to symbolize the wholeness of all. The yang and the yin symbolize the male-female connection, harkening back to the relationship between the Mother-Goddess and her spouse..."both single and double spirals were among the most sacred symbols of Neolithic Europe---the spiral was connected with the idea of death and rebirth; entering the mysterious earth womb, penetrating to its core, and passing out again by the same route."...the Heyi-ya-if-or double spiral-represents the relationship of the finite to the infinite; the never ending spiral of life to death, and back again." -The Woman's Dictionary of Symbols and Sacred Objects, by Barbara S. Walker

A double spiral labyrinth can also be a symbol of initiation and the ritual journey through a labyrinth to the sacred realms beyond the center. Additionally, the center can represent complete balance, and/or the place where Heaven and Earth merge.

Stillpoint At Becksides spiritual retreat center in Bellingham, WA recently installed a double spiral labyrinth on its property for use by retreat participants and visitors. The double spiral is the second one on the property; it joins a seven circuit Chartres-style labyrinth. Both labyrinths were designed and installed by [The Laughing Flower Labyrinth Co.](#) of Bellingham with the help of retreat center owners and volunteers.

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