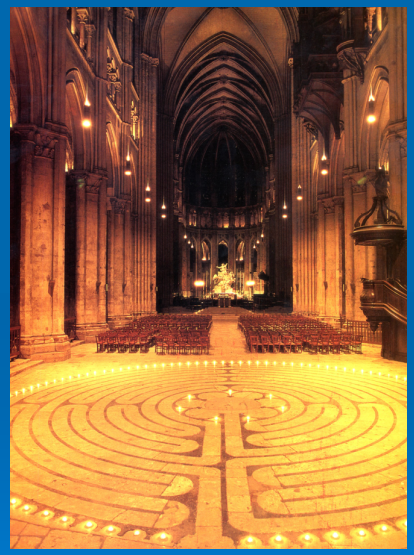
# SG304A.Ia Labyrinths: A Mini-Pilgrimage into Self

## Online Module SG 304A (Advanced IV)



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# SG304A.Ic Labyrinths: A Mini-Pilgrimage into Self

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# SG304A.ld Labyrinths - Introduction

**Labyrinths can be found in all sacred cultures of the world, from Vedic India to the Hopi culture and the Christian Europe of the cathedrals, yet labyrinths transcend all cultures because they are collective archetypes grounded in consciousness itself. People who experience labyrinths come from all walks of life, religious backgrounds and spiritual practices and find in the labyrinth a sacred ground of communion.**

**Labyrinths guard, map out and activate the spirit of a sacred place - which really is one's own Self. Like mandalas, labyrinths are sacred wave-guides to the Center. A Labyrinth is a Mini-Pilgrimage into our own Self, an open invitation and a guide to encounter Who We Are. The best known example of labyrinth, embedded in the stone pavement of Chartres Cathedral (France, c. 1230), used to be walked in place of the actual pilgrimage to Jerusalem. It was a Holy Journey. Likewise, if you walk the labyrinth as a vision quest, with the full dedication of a pilgrim, the old "you" will be left behind and a new expansion of consciousness will flower.**

**The labyrinth is best understood when viewed from above: the lines appear as delineating walls and the spaces in between as pathways, the legendary "Thread of Ariadne" or "Royal Road", the ceremonial pathway leading from multiplicity to unity. From this higher perspective, the labyrinth reveals its true function of being a vortex dance, a dynamic, evolutionary, choreographic topology of symmetric geometries and alternation of polarities. Yet, in order to attain this bird's eye view, the labyrinth has to be walked with the entire body, step by step, moment by moment, with the full presence of a sacred dance. In order to reveal its mystery and gift, the labyrinth has to be bodily - and boldly - stepped into. The very process of walking the labyrinth turns out to be the destination: then, one is linked up, by harmonic resonance, with the larger universal, cosmic order.**

**As a *unicursal* (one way in, one way out) path, a labyrinth is showing and teaching how to be centered: the design, by its internal geometry, carries the pilgrim in a safe flow so that full attention can be given to inner focus. This differentiates the labyrinth from the maze which is *multicursal* (many ways in & out and confusing paths) and leads to externally-oriented focus. The labyrinth thus is a potent healing practice of individual and trans-personal integration as it sums up the spiraling human journey: on the way to the center of the labyrinth, one cleanses the dust of the human road and regain wholeness and oneness; on the journey out to experience multiplicity, one is born anew to consciously dwell in a human body made "holy" by having got a fresh taste of the Center-Source.**

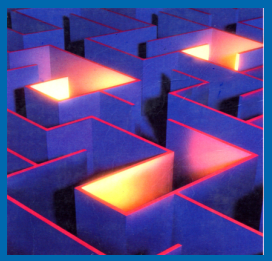
**SG304A is inviting you to first visit the various types and geometries of labyrinths, including how to trace the most classical designs. A brief gallery of labyrinths follows, taking you through history, locations and cultures, with a special chapter devoted to the time of the Medieval cathedrals in France, a period when labyrinths appeared as flowers of initiatic geometry. A cycle of history later, we are now entering a similar period: the magnitude of the labyrinth renaissance, specially in America, is staggering. The healing ways of the labyrinth are being rediscovered and practiced by the most diverse people and sometimes in the most public places.**

**The contemporary resurgence of labyrinths is stemming from our deeply rooted urge to honor again the spirit sacredness of all life, beyond all denominations and localized beliefs. The labyrinth is Sacred Geometry made public - and walkable - again. Enjoy!**

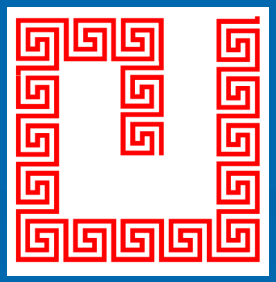
# SG304A. Chapter 1. Labyrinths: Types & Geometries

# SG304A.1.1.1 Labyrinth & Other Patterns (1)

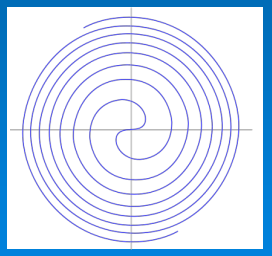
A labyrinth



A maze



A meander



A double spiral

**In daily language "labyrinths" are oftentimes confused with "mazes", "meanders", and even "spirals". Dictionaries perpetuate the confusion. Actually, these various patterns are very different and need to be clearly defined. It is essential to restore the classical meaning of *"labyrinth"* as a "one way path" (*unicursal*), by contrast with a "maze" (*multicursal*) or a "meander". Unlike a labyrinth, a spiral's path is not going through alternating changes of direction.**

**Lab.y.rinth n. [Gr. *Laburinthos*]**
**A structure containing an intricate network of winding passages hard to follow without losing one's way; maze…**
**A complicated, perplexing arrangement, course of affairs etc…**
**Maze n. [ME. *Masen*, to confuse]**
**1. A confusing, intricate network of winding pathways; labyrinth…**
**2. A state of confusion of bewilderment. (Webster, 1970)**

**Lab·y·rinth. 1. A large network of paths or passages which cross each other, making it very difficult to find your way [= maze]**
**2. Something that is very complicated and difficult to understand.**
**(Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English. www.idoceonline.com)**

**Lab-y-rinth *n.*1.a. An intricate structure of interconnecting passages through which it is difficult to find one's way; a maze. b. Labyrinth in *Greek Mythology.* The maze in which the Minotaur was confined.**
**2. Something highly intricate or convoluted in character, composition, or construction.**
**(The Free Dictionary. www.thefreedictionary.com)**

**We have here a big confusion in terminology. For the contemporary mindset, both "labyrinth" and "maze" are words associated with negative concepts of complication and difficulty. Two antonyms have been made synonyms and the Sacred has been turned into a nuisance.**

**This is a complete inversion of the classical meaning of labyrinth:**
***A map of consciousness leading to Oneness.***

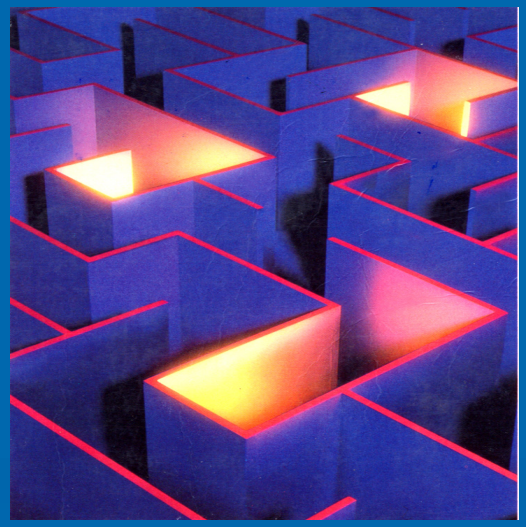
# SG304A.1.1.2 Labyrinth & Other Patterns (2) - Maze

**Hermann Kern (1941-1985), the world leading authority on Labyrinths, stated in *"Through the Labyrinth"* (English translation, 2000. p. 316.)**

***"Labyrinths and mazes offer the walker totally different experiences: in a labyrinth, there is a single, undeviating path to the center. The walker is not confronted with problems of orientation and can instead direct his/her attention inwardly, concentrating on the significance of the journey. By contrast, the path to the center of a maze is determined by the choices the walker makes at intersections, which can be done only by concentrating on externals. In a labyrinth, success is a natural consequence of the path's design: the walker is guided to the center by the existing framework."***

***Labyrinth design:***
**Unicursal**
**(one way in only, one way out only)**
**Holistic**
**(has a purpose as a whole)**
**Will lead you to Oneness**
**in a peaceful, relaxed way.**

*"When life becomes a maze, walk the labyrinth."*
*(Unknown)*

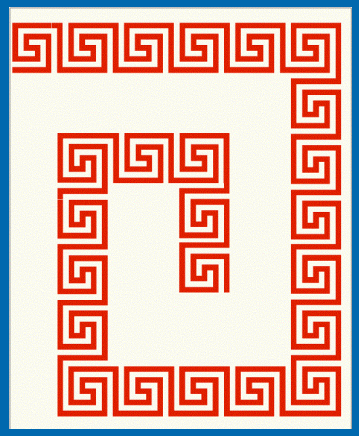


***Maze design:***
**Multicursal**
**(many ways in, many ways out)**
**Fragmented**
**Will lead you to Confusion,**
**in a competitive (win / lose) & stressful way**
**(fear of being lost).**

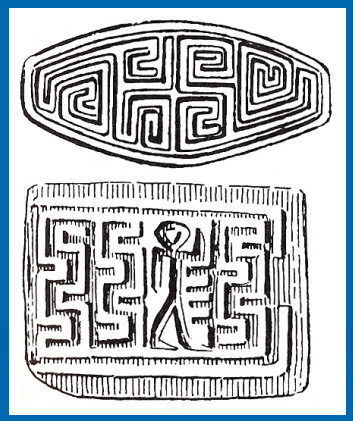
# SG304A.1.1.3 Labyrinth & Other Patterns (3) - Meander (1)

*Meanders* differ from labyrinths in that they are not circumscribed by an outer line and they are neither self-contained forms not do they have centers. Flat meanders are patterns where lines are arranged in close succession.

In meanders, as well as in *knots* and woven patterns, the paths are frequently intersected. Since meanders do not consist of just one line, but many, the movement in a specific direction of any line cancels out the others when they are taken as a whole; in other words, there is no "path" and no directionality with a specific beginning and end.

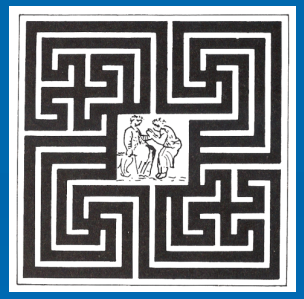


↑ Flat meander.

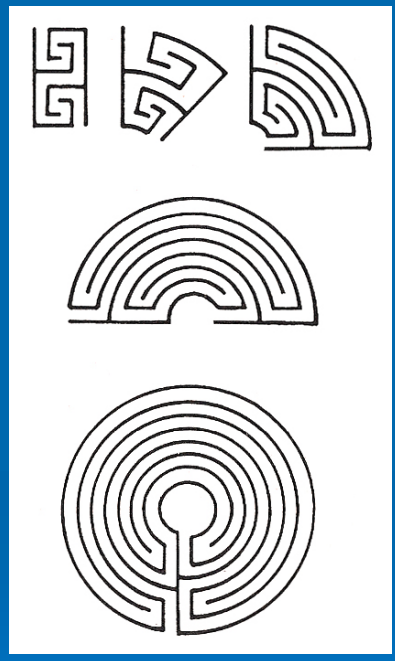


↑ Egyptian seals with meander patterns. 3rd millennium BCE.

← Silver coin from Knossos with swastika meander.

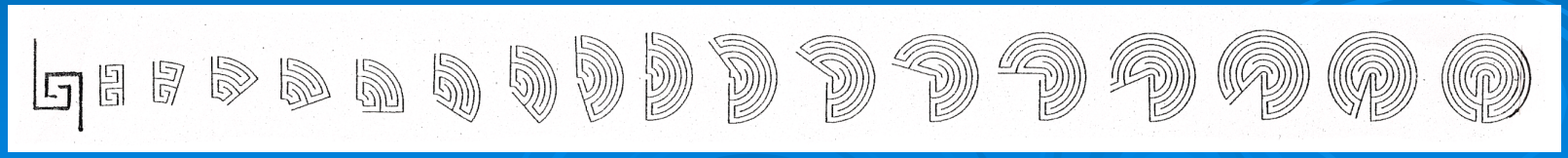


← Square meander. Sparta, Greece. Ca. 250 CE.



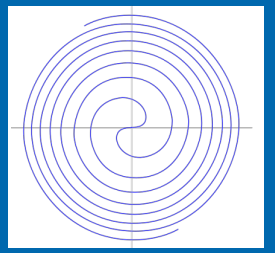
Even though meanders are not labyrinths, there is a dynamic connection between a double meander and a labyrinth. In the diagram on the left, Jeff Saward has illustrated this evolutionary connection.

A double meander can be turned into a 8-ring labyrinth. All you need to do is extend or "stretch" the spatial divisions round a pivotal point. This turning point becomes the center of the labyrinth and the outer lines of the meander come full circle to mark the labyrinth's only transecting, radial line.



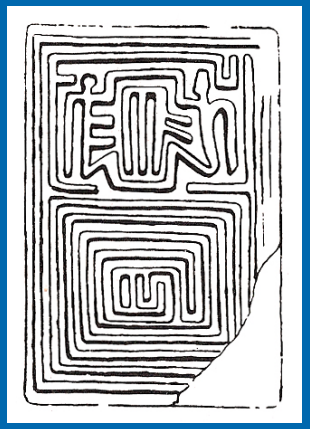
↑ The circular extension of a simple meander creates a 8-rings labyrinth.

# SG304A.1.1.4 Labyrinth & Other Patterns (4) - Spiral



Labyrinths and spirals are similar in one way: their paths are directed towards one destination and are not intersected by other paths. They differ however in that labyrinths are almost completely enclosed by an outer line and that their paths are subject to a continuous, yet pendular change of direction. Sometimes, even concentric circles are confused with labyrinths but they can only be called labyrinths if:

1. each circle has an opening that can be entered. 2. the path between the circles is cut by axes (or half axes) such as the walker is guided to traverse the entire labyrinth by way of a circuitous path.



↑ Egyptian seal with spiral pattern. 3rd millenium BCE.

↑ Neo-Babylonian clay tablet with double spiral.

↑ Concentric cup-and-rings marks. Ca. 2000-1500 BCE.

In conclusion of this brief comparison of labyrinths versus other linear patterns, let us quote Hermann Kahn:
*"All these figures - mazes, meanders, spirals - are similar in that their forms are determined by positive spatial elements (the sinuosities of the delineating walls). In contrast, the most important features of a labyrinth are not the lines forming the walls, but the NEGATIVE SPACE OF THE PATH formed by those lines and determining the pattern of movement."*

The walls, in a labyrinth, are not important: their only function is to enclose and waveguide the PATH and thus define the choreography of evolutionary motion to the center.

← This 2004 crop-circle is not a labyrinth.

# SG304A.1.2.1 Typology of Labyrinths (1) Cultural Types

**Now that labyrinths are clearly defined as "one -way paths to a Center", the question arises: are there more than one labyrinth design?**
**In fact, there are two questions:**
**1. How many one-way paths have been historically found?**
**2. How many one-way paths designs are mathematically possible?**

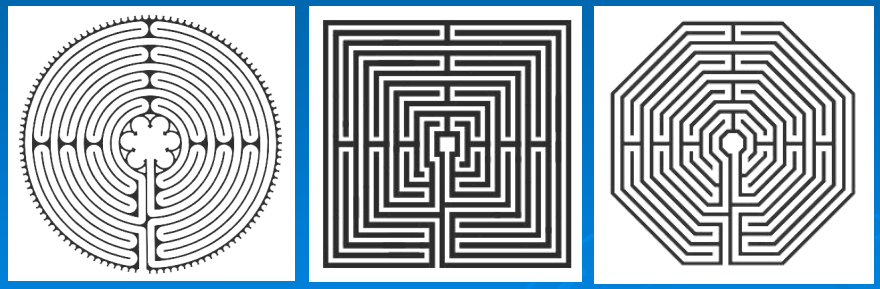
**In his wonderful labyrinth resource website (www.labyrinthos,net), Jeff Saward proposes four major categories of labyrinths:**

**1. Classical labys - usually of the 7-rings variety, based on a cross seed-pattern and the most popular design worldwide.**

**2. Roman labys - they come in 3 main varieties: meander, serpentine and spiral.**

**3. Medieval labys - based on a 4-fold symmetry and the usual Chartres-type 11 circuits. They come in a circle, square or octagonal shape.**

**4. New Laby Designs - newly developed, they keep the unicursal intention of the labyrinth but reformat it in new thematic or communication contexts. Sometimes the path runs through the entire design to back out again. The potential of the labyrinth as a cosmic archetype may just be at its beginning stage.**



**The 3 main varieties of Medieval Labyrinths.**

**Classical Labyrinths**

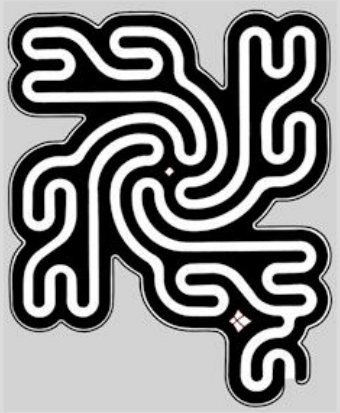
*Dating back to the Neolithic period, and found worldwide, these are by far the oldest and most widespread type of labyrinth*

**Roman Labyrinths**

*First developed in the 2nd century BCE, they are found throughout Europe and North Africa, wherever the Romans settled*

**Medieval Labyrinths**

*First developed in 9th/10th century Europe, they soon spread throughout Europe and have become especially popular in modern times*



**Contemporary Labyrinths**

*First developed in the late 20th century, this rapidly evolving group often have unusual designs, but are clearly labyrinths by intention*

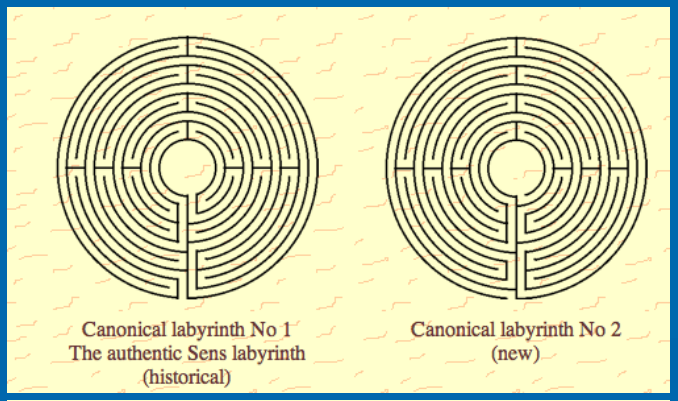
**Credit: www.labyrinthos.net**

# SG304A.1.2.2 Typology of Labyrinths (2) Mathematical Types

**The concept of "mathematical" labyrinths refers to possible variations and combinations of classical labyrinths. It mostly applies to larger labyrinths such as the medieval 11-rings type. This research was developed by Jacques Hébert (1938 - 2007) and is shared on the website www.labyreims.com. Hébert discovered that the path of the medieval labyrinth is rhythmical, i.e. built from certain rhythmical motifs repeated and arranged in a very intentional fashion, said to be "canonical". [See infra Chapter 3.7].**

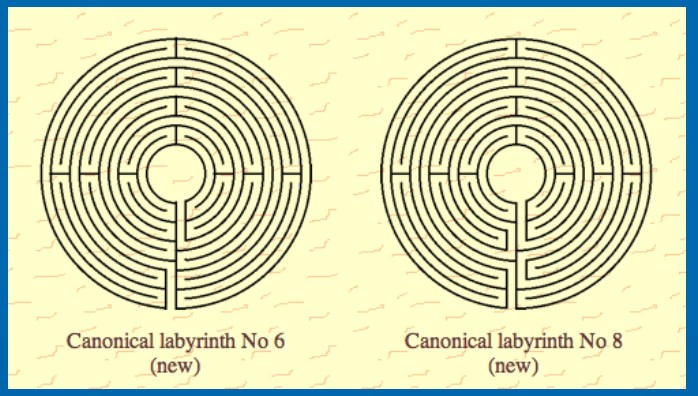
**Hébert defines the "canonical" (prefect) medieval labyrinth as displaying two properties: 1. All segments of the path are quarter-circles or half-circles - no segments longer than that. 2. The sequence of the elements in the path is reversible - identical elements occupy the same position in the sequence going in the labyrinth and going out of it. According to Hébert, there exists a certain number of possible canonical "mathematical" 11-rings labyrinths (numbered to 20) of which only three are known to have existed historically / culturally: those of the cathedrals of Chartres, Sens and Reims.**

**The total number of theoretical possibilities is 192, of which only 20 produce functional labyrinths, which are indeed the 20 canonical labyrinths, of which 13 are built from the 4 "ordinary" templates and 7 from the 2 "meta" templates. The 6 families that J. Hébert found are: Chartres (and inverted), Reims (and inverted), Meta-Reims (and inverted). Below are some examples of these mathematical "canonical" labyrinth templates.**



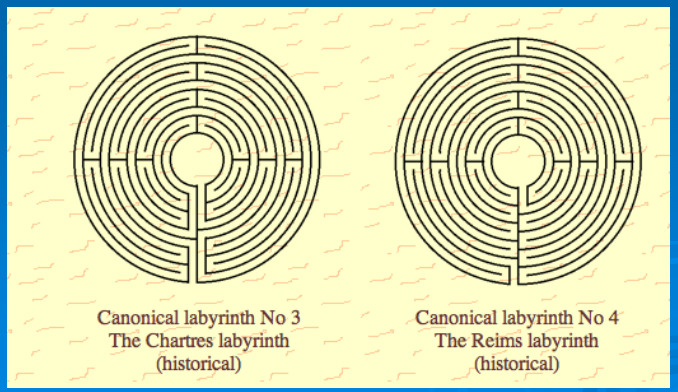
Canonical labyrinth No 1
The authentic Sens labyrinth
(historical)

Canonical labyrinth No 2
(new)



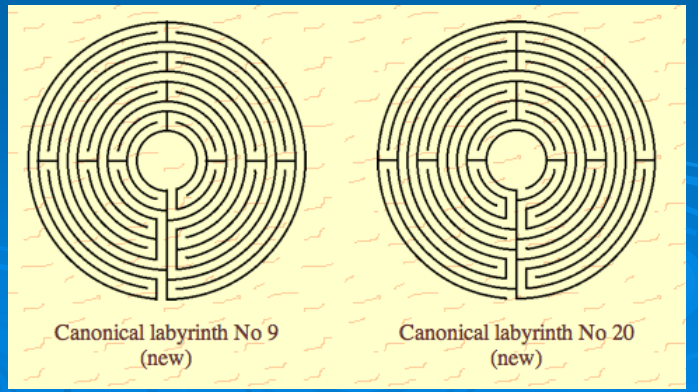
Canonical labyrinth No 6
(new)

Canonical labyrinth No 8
(new)



Canonical labyrinth No 3
The Chartres labyrinth
(historical)

Canonical labyrinth No 4
The Reims labyrinth
(historical)



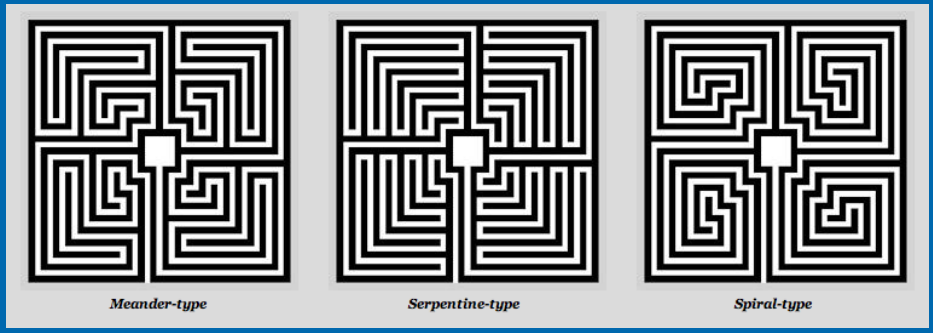
Canonical labyrinth No 9
(new)

Canonical labyrinth No 20
(new)

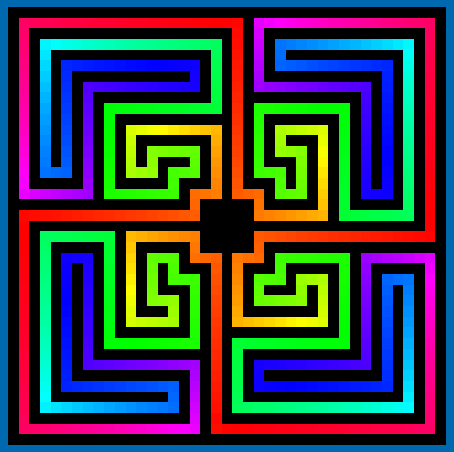
# SG304A.1.3.1 Roman Labyrinths Types (1) Path

The typical Roman labyrinth was a design commonly used for floor mosaics. The path consisted of 4 quadrants, each of which is completed before the next is started. The path within the quadrants varied but was commonly a three quarters unrolled Cretan labyrinth.

The quarter variations of Roman labyrinths follow 3 main shapes: meander, snake and spiral.

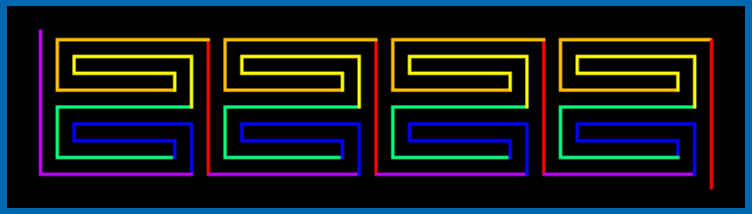


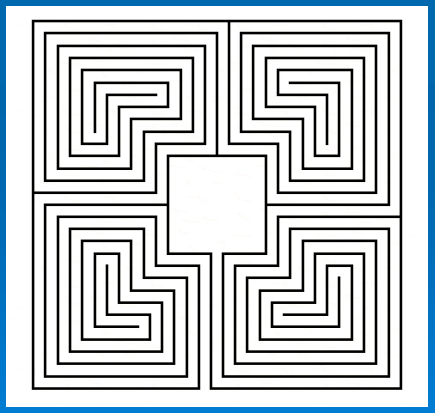

(Credit: www.labyrinthos.net)



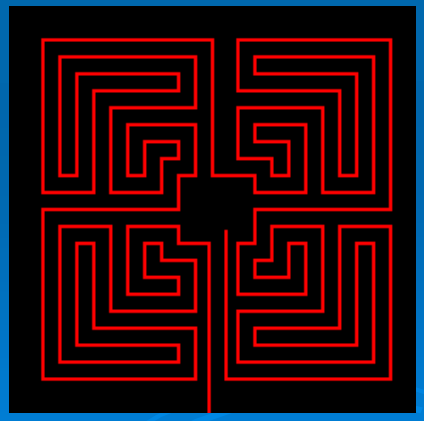
← 4 rainbow cycles through a roman labyrinth. (Andrew Hardwick).

Note: this design is in a loop for maximum symmetry. When eye-walking it, jump from the last red path to center!

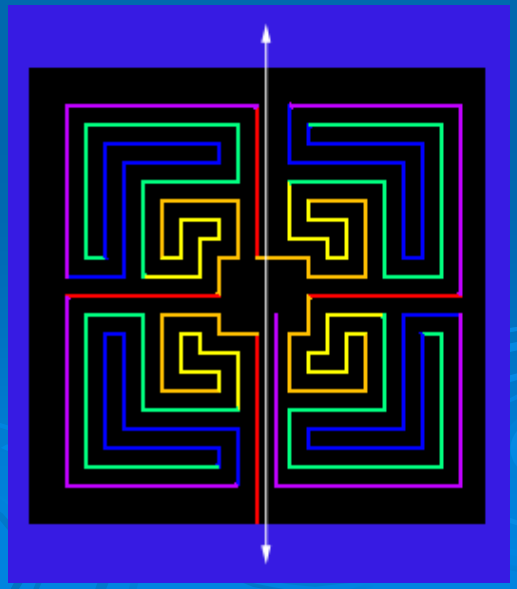




↑ Walls of a Roman labyrinth.



↑ Path of a Roman labyrinth



←↑ Fold-out diagram.

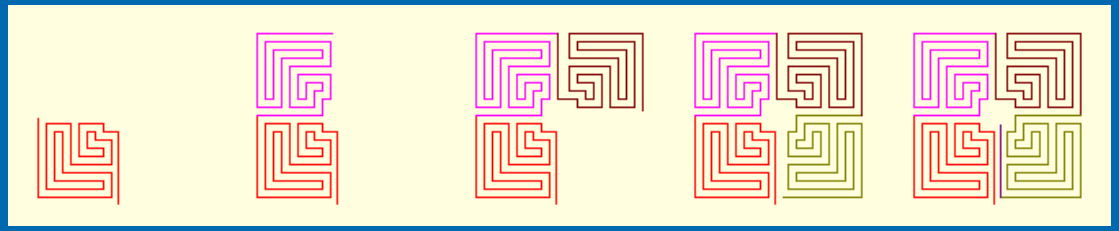
Here, the path of the Roman labyrinth has been rainbow colored, then cut through from the bottom up (white line with arrows) and uncurled into a rectangle.

The start is red.

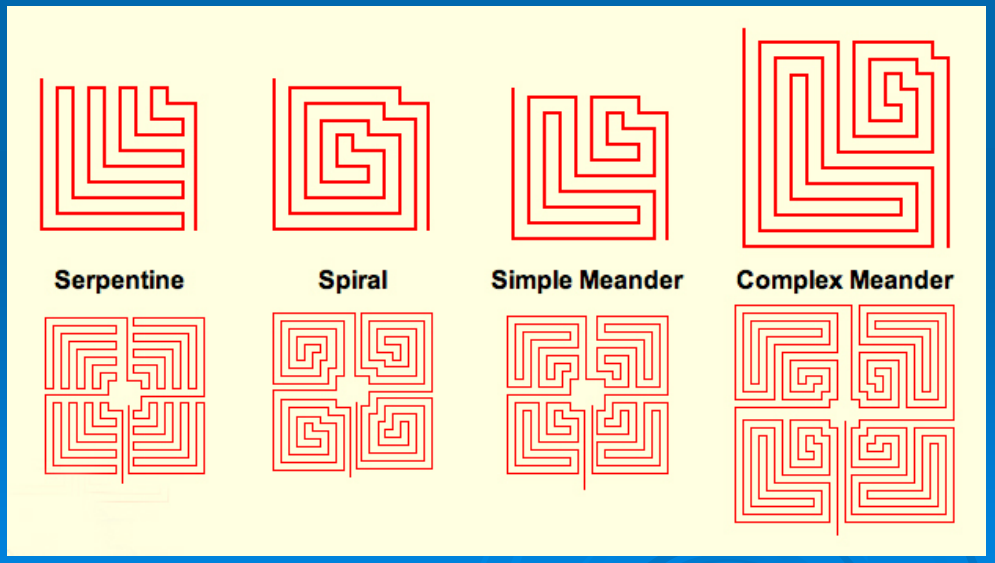
(Credit for color images)

# SG304A.1.3.2 Roman Labyrinths Types (2) Tracing

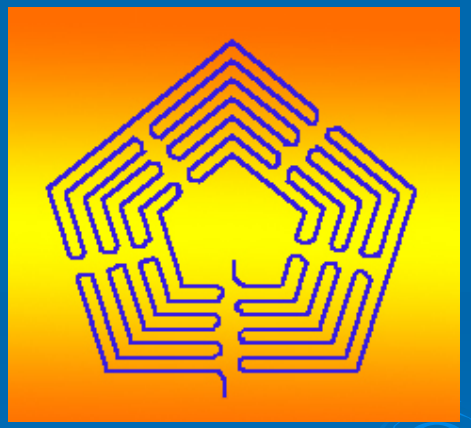
Each quarter of a Roman labyrinth is the same - it has rotational symmetry.
Step #1: Draw the first quarter.
Step #2: Rotate the same pattern round the centre to get the second quarter.
Step #3: Continue with the other two quarters.
Step #4: Finally, since at this point you will still be at the edge, add the line into the centre.



A Roman labyrinth can have various designs. Most of the Roman mazes in England have the above pattern, yet elsewhere in Europe there are different patterns. Below are four common forms - the top part gives one quarter and the bottom part gives the complete labyrinth.



Triangular labyrinth path

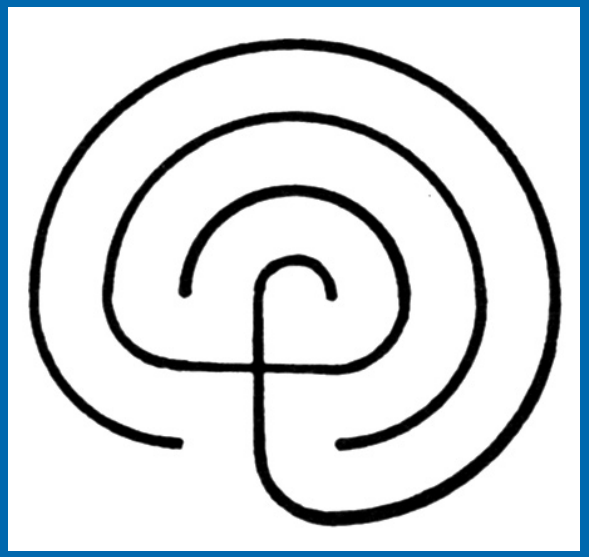


Pentagonal labyrinth path

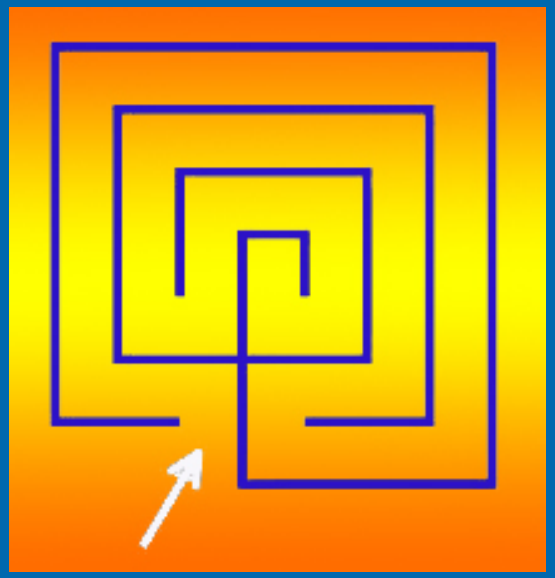
D(o) I(t) Y(ourself)
Make your own Roman Laby here:
//gwydir.demon.co.uk/jo/mosaic/mkmosaic.htm

(Credit for All images)

# SG304A.1.4 The 3-Rings Laby - The Path

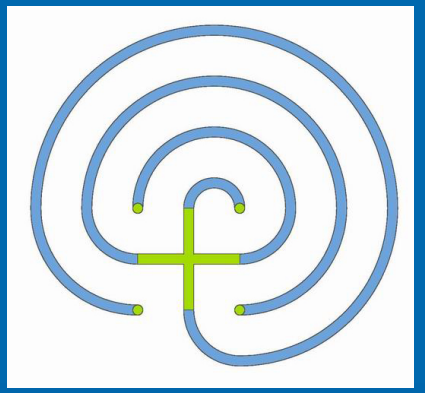


↑ 3-rings laby - classical form.

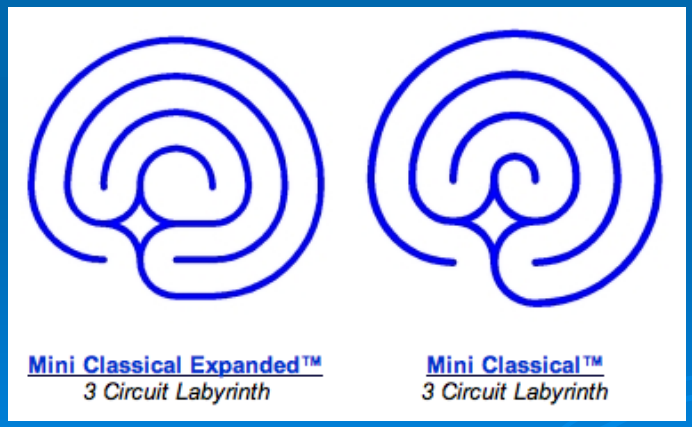


↑ 3-rings laby - square form.

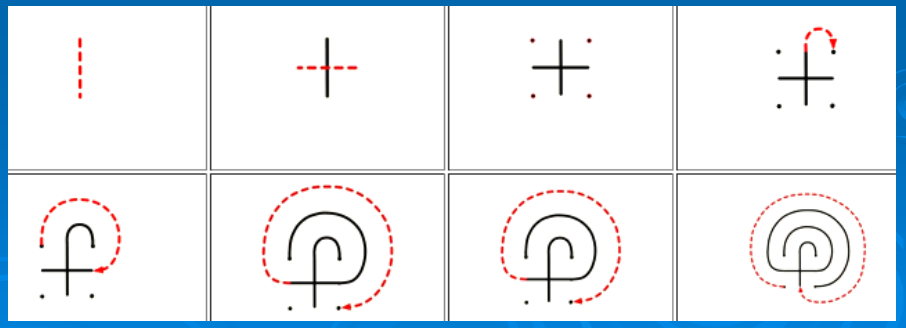
↑ Top step labyrinth. St Mary church. Cork, Ireland. "Labyrinth Week 2005". (Credit)



3-rings laby showing seed cross and 9-dots pattern ➔ (Credit).




↑ The two 3-rings designs offered by www.labyrinthcompany.com

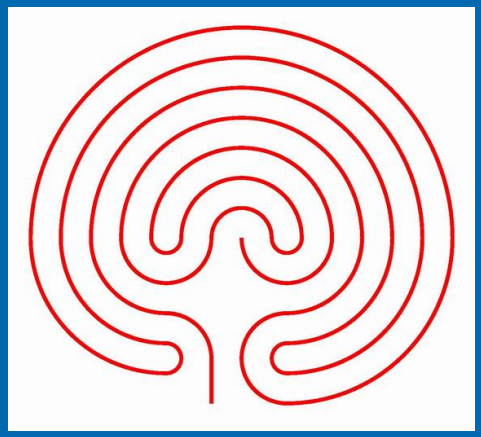


↑ Tracing the 3-rings labyrinth. Credit: www.waterlabyrinths.com

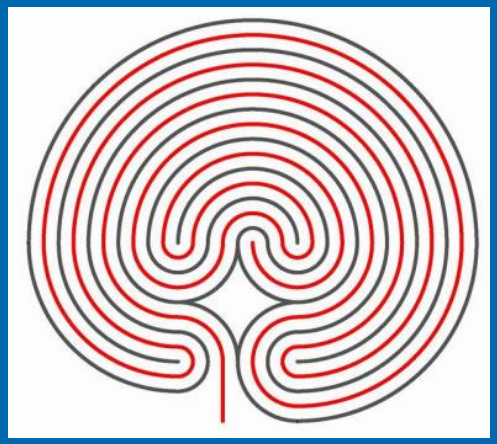
# SG304A.1.5.1 The 7-Rings Labyrinth (1)

← Hand-drawn classical 7-rings

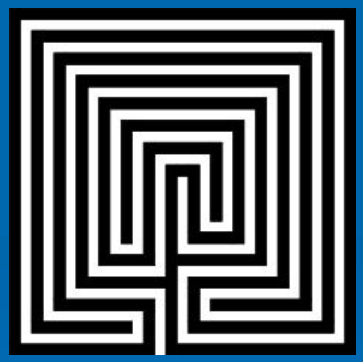
➔ The "walls" of the classical 7-rings labyrinth (also called the "Cretan Labyrinth"). Found all over the world, it is based on a cross pattern (see infra). It is traditionally entered on the left, the feminine & intuitive side.



↑ The "path" of the classical 7-rings labyrinth or "Thread of Ariadne"

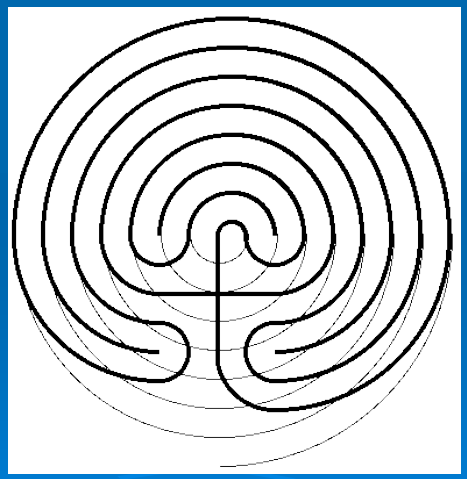


↑ Combining the "walls" and the "path". Credit



↑ The square variety of the 7-rings classical labyrinth (www.labyrinthos.net).

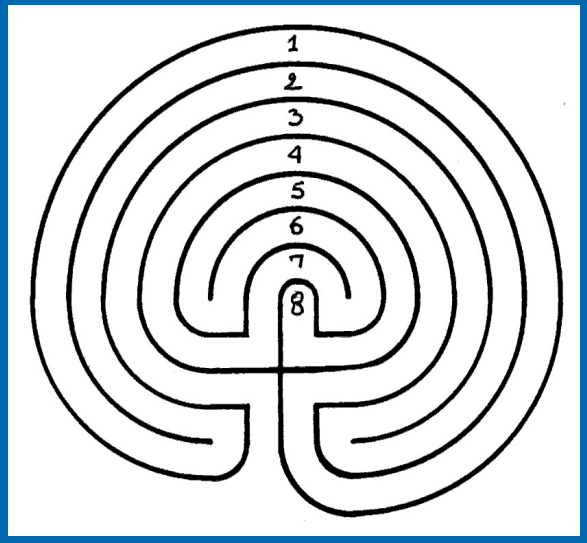
"In China, as early as 1000 CE, rectangular labyrinths made of incense were used to measure time. Each straight length of incense took a known amount of time to burn, so in a ceremony, for example, as the incense came to a corner, the celebrant knew it was time to get on to the next part of the ritual." (Sig Lonegren. Credit).



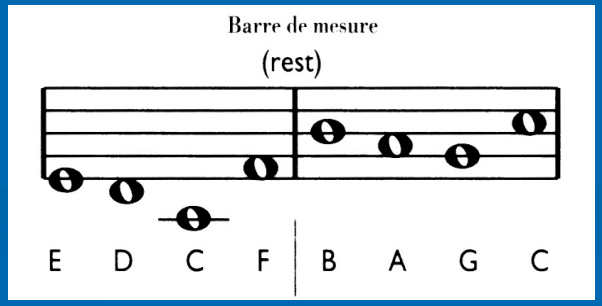
↑ It is essential to see that the classic 7-rings labyrinth is built on a spiral (Archimedean) structure. It is a vortex. The medieval labyrinth, by contrast, is concentric.

↑ In the Greek legend of Theseus and the Minotaur, the "thread" received from Ariadne allowed Theseus to find his way out of the labyrinth. [See infra]. (Credit)

# SG304A.1.5.2 The 7-Rings Laby (2) The Path

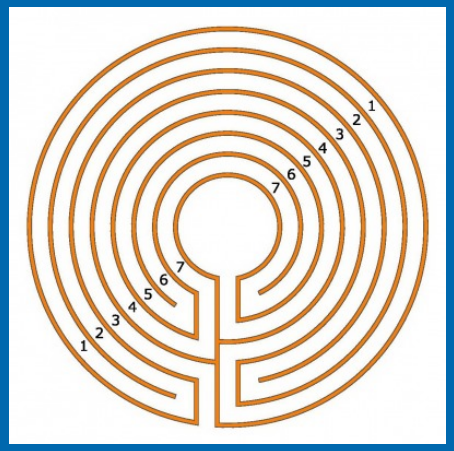



↑ Mathematical order of paths (from outside to center): 1 - 8

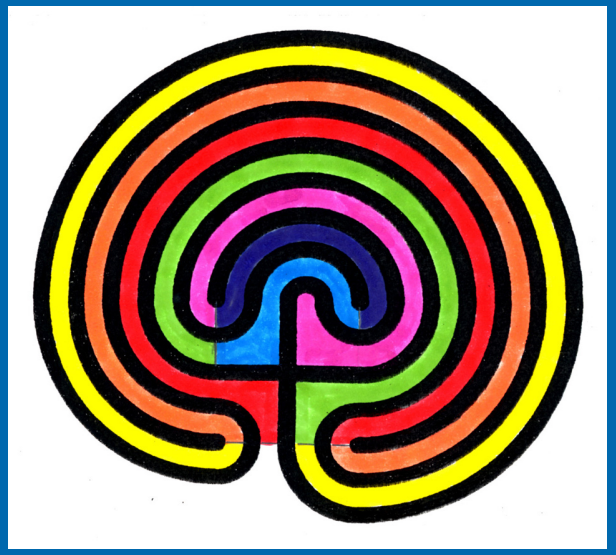



↑ The walking order of paths translated into music.
**3 2 1 4 / 7 6 5 8 Mi Re Do Fa / Si La Sol Do**
(Sig Lonegren. *Les labyrinthes*.)

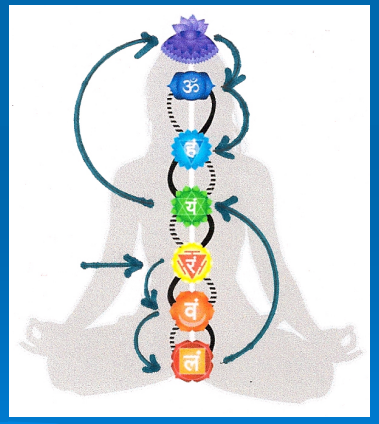
← Display labyrinth by Paxworks. Credit




↑ Rounded 7-rings labyrinth. (Credit)



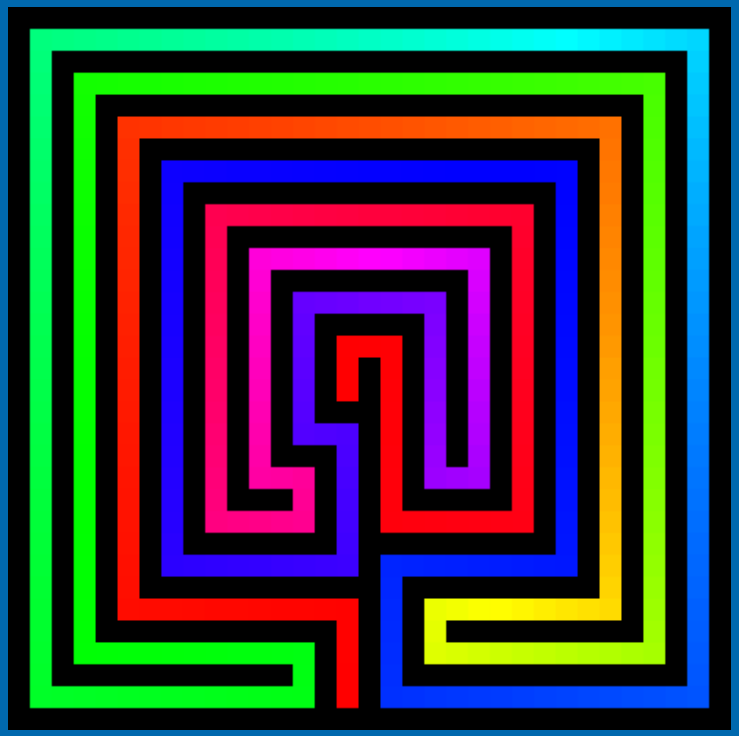
Walking order of paths in the rainbow color sequence.
3 2 1 4 / 7 6 5 8

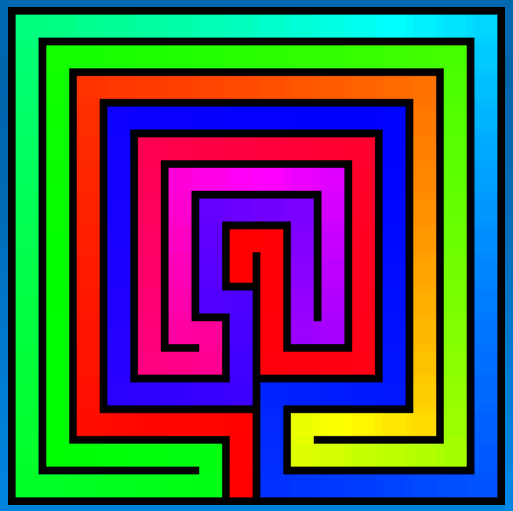


↑ In terms of energy centers (chakras), the progression is not straight from Root to Crown but follows a specific circuit of awakening: 3. Solar Plexus - 2. Sex - 1. Root - 4. Heart. - 7. Crown. - 6. Third Eye. - 5. Throat… and 8. Completion and integration to a higher octave. You can meditate auspiciously on this organic / harmonic progression.
(See infra: Labyrinths & Chakras).

# SG304A.1.5.3 The 7-Rings Laby (3) Rainbow Loops

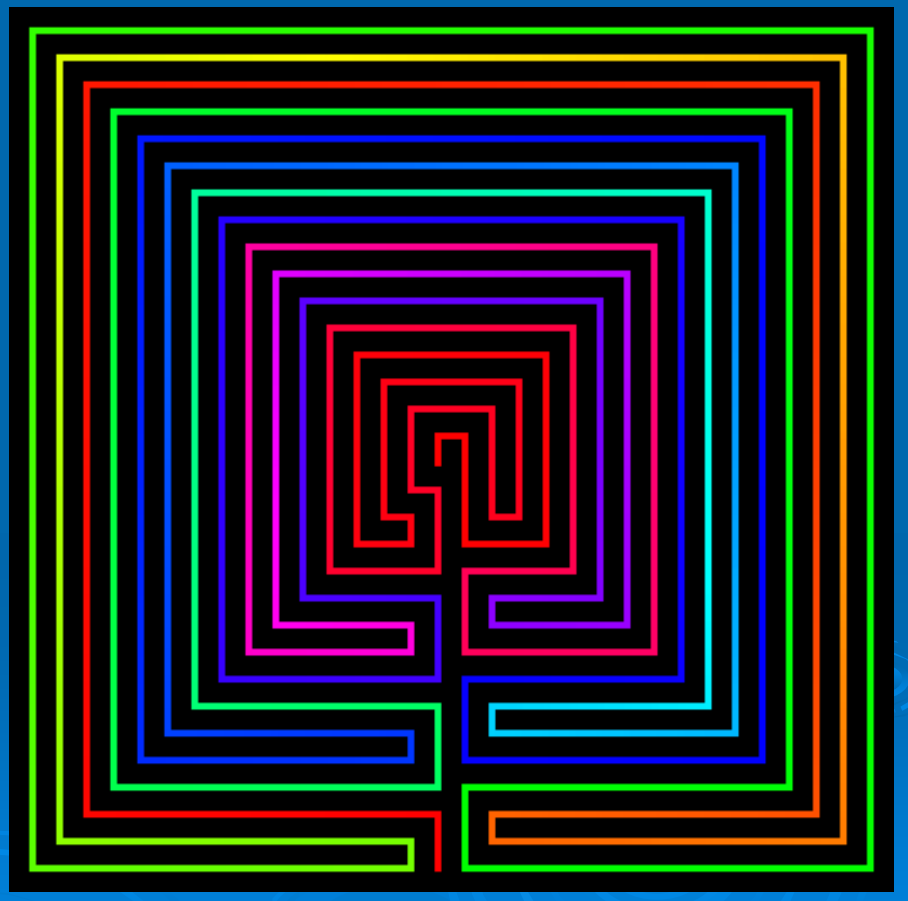
On his website //duramecho.com, Andrew Hardwick offers a gallery of labyrinths with looped rainbow coloring. Visit the pulsating color animations for a "chromatic" walking of the labyrinths.





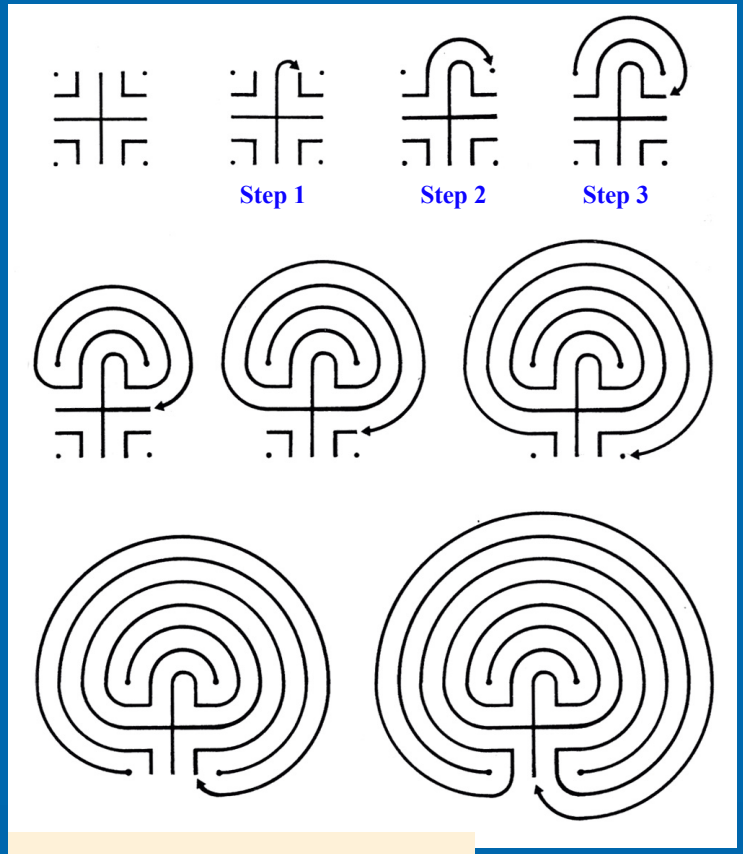
↑ Classical square 7-rings labyrinth with the path progressing from red at the entrance through the spectrum ending back on red in the centre.

← Changing the relative wall width.

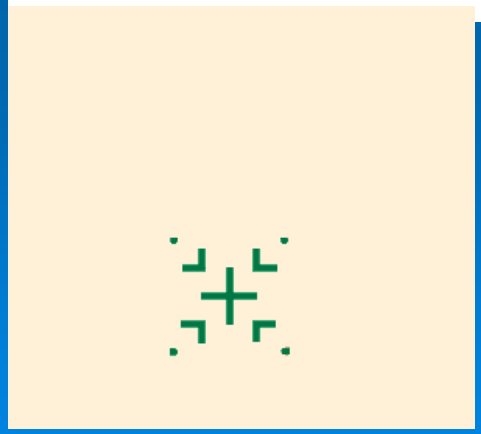


↑ The 7-rings classical labyrinth design is naturally expandable as it consists of two repeats of the same path folding. In this version, the repeats were doubled to four.

# SG304A.1.6.1 Tracing the 7-Rings Laby (1) Seed Patterns




↑ Tracing the 7-rings Labyrinth from the "Classic Seed Pattern".

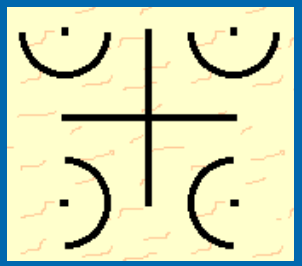


← Animation for tracing steps.

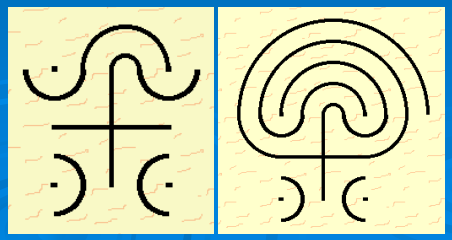
Tracing a 7-rings labyrinth (on the ground, on a piece of paper or in your mind's eye) is quite easy. Once you know the pattern, you will always remember. The two seed patterns (this page) are very geometrical. There is the "Classic Seed Pattern" and the "Cup Seed Pattern".

• The Classic "seed" pattern (left) is simply a cross with 4 "L" in the inter-directions. You might also think of it as a fat double cross. 4 dots are completing the pattern. It is the traditional "9 Dots Pattern" [◆SG305]. Then, just connect all the "terminals" going clockwise with a curved line.
Step 1: start from the top point (at 12 o'clock) and trace a curved line to the next point on the right.
Step 2: start from the next point on the left and trace a curved line to the next point on the right…. Keep going…

• The "Cup Seed Pattern" is illustrated below.



↑ The "Cup Seed Pattern" starts with the cross and 4 "cups" (rather than 4"L"). The final 4 dots are unchanged. (www.labyreims.com)
↓↓ "Connecting the dots" is the same process.

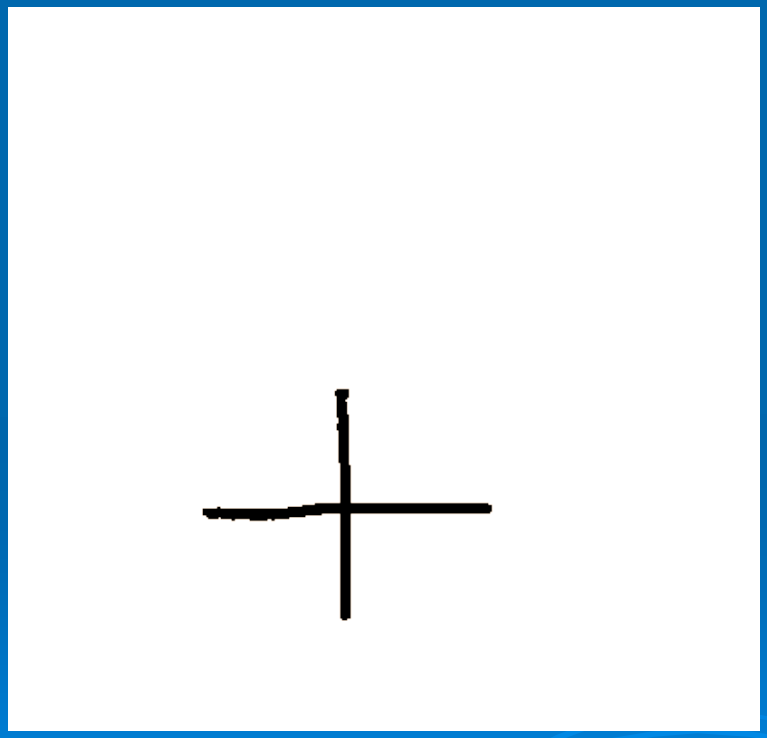


↑ Animation using the "Cup Seed Pattern" for tracing the 7-rings. This is using "cups" rather than "quadrants".
Go to: www.labyreims.com

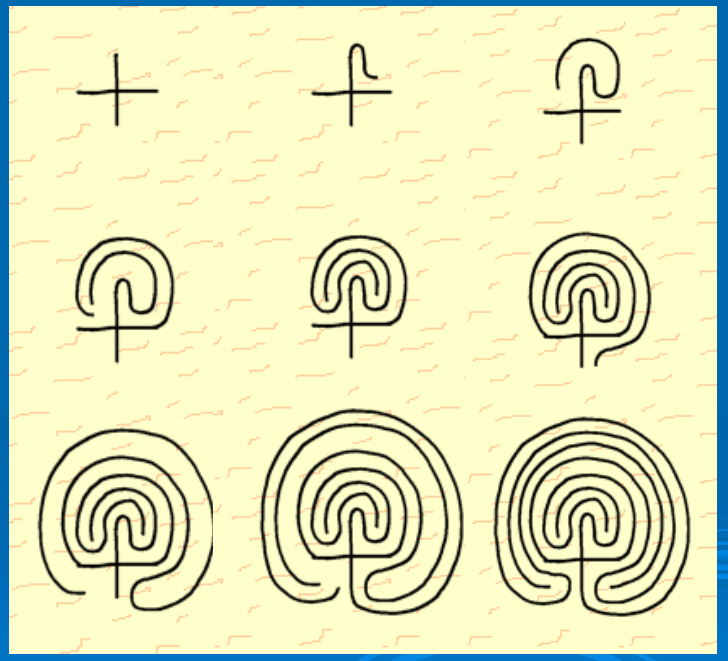
# SG304A.1.6.2 Tracing the 7-Rings Laby (2) Long Hand

**Whereas the Seed Pattern methods are geometrical, left-brain and rational, the Long Hand method is artistic, right-brain and intuitive. As commented by J. Hébert,** ***"The Seed method can be taught and learned easily and is a good 'ice breaker' in any party. The Long Hand method is difficult to learn and teach, and may not be very impressive for 'ordinary' witnesses, but the pleasure of drawing it is much deeper and it carries a feeling of participating in a very ancient and primitive action, and also of conducting a somewhat difficult and dangerous symbolic ritual."***

**Adds Hébert:** ***"I have found that the Long Line method can also be used as a choreographic argument or scenario for 'dancing the labyrinth'.*** **[See infra Chapter 5].** ***The 'long line' method can also be executed without the initial cross. In fact, one may say that the labyrinth is really composed of two lines, their intersection constituting the cross."*** **(www.labyreims.com).**



**↑ Animation of the "Long Hand" method.**
**Go to: www.labyreims.com**



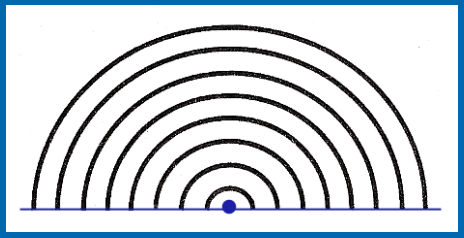
**↑ Drawing sequence of the Long Hand method.**

**Animation and Drawing Sequence are from J. Hébert's website: www.labyreims.com**

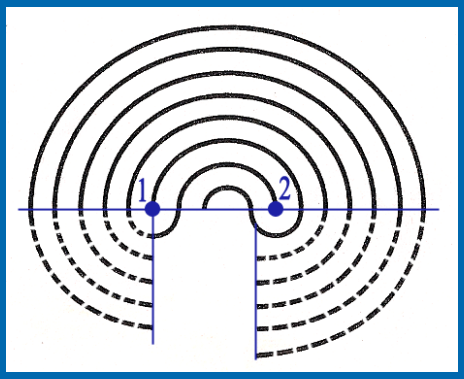
# SG304A.1.6.3 Tracing the 7-Rings Laby (3) Real Size

Besides the hand-drawn tracing techniques (seed pattern & long hand), it is actually quite simple to trace a 7-rings labyrinth using a compass or a tracing rope (attached to whatever center is used: 0, 1 or 2).

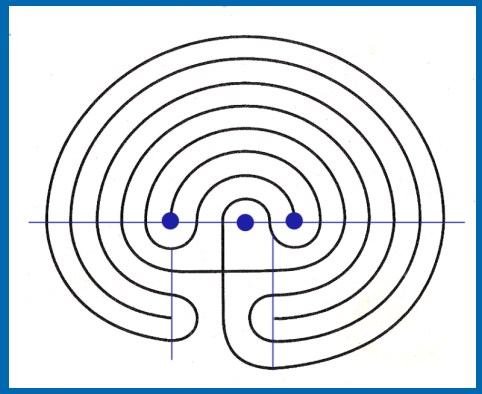
You have to realize that the top half of the laby is a *semi circle*, whereas the bottom left and the bottom right are *quarter circles*. Follow the steps and you will soon have a pretty good labyrinth.



Step 1: From center O (Blue dot), trace 8 semi-circles.

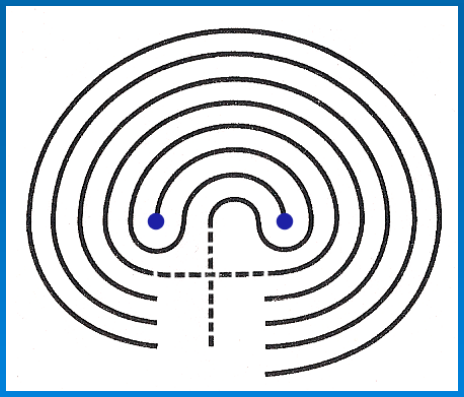



Step 2: From center 1 and center 2, trace quarter circles to blue vertical line.

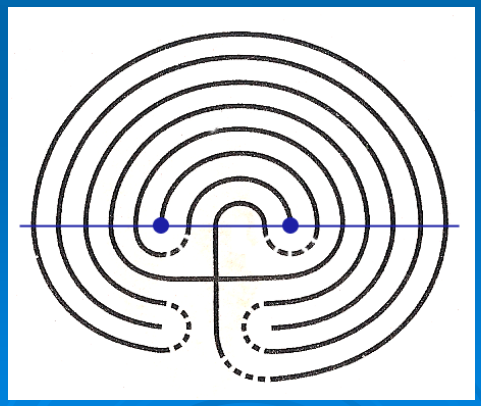


↑ The completed design

↑ A modified 7-rings labyrinth in construction. (Credit)

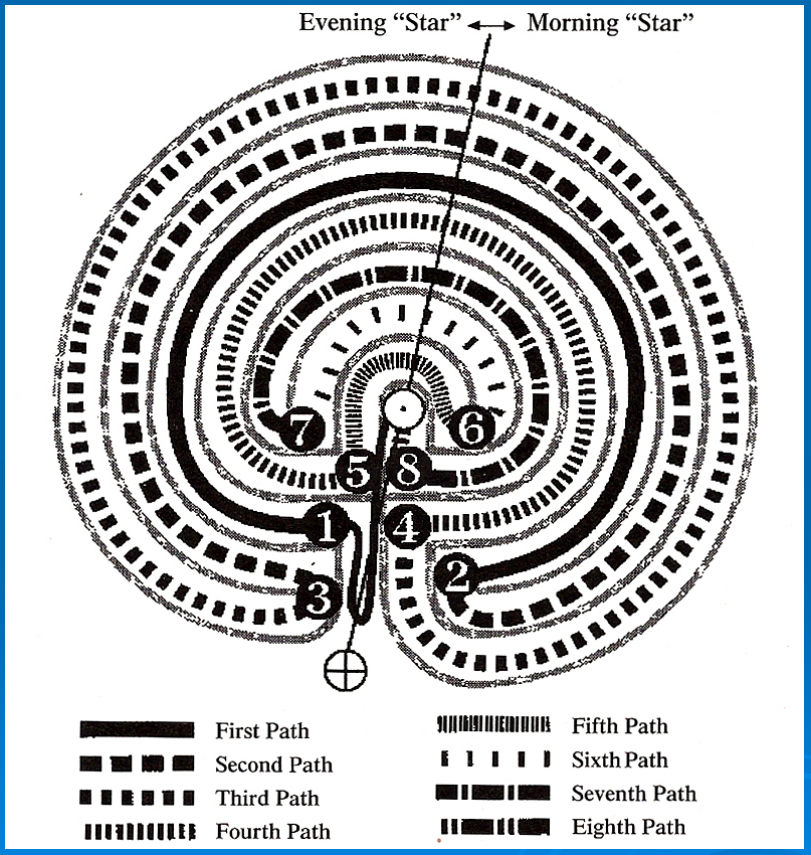


Step 3: Trace the cross.



Step 4: adjust the curves and complete.

Credit.




↑ Mercury's annual cycle of 3 "direct" and 4 "retrograde" motions.

# SG304A.1.7 The 7-Rings Laby & Mercury's Orbit

**In his book *Labyrinths, Ancient Myths & Modern Uses* (1991), Sig Lonegren shares his research about the connection between the 7-rings labyrinth design and the cycle of the planet Mercury. It is amazing!**

**Because of Mercury's close proximity to the sun, it can only be seen just after sunset, or just before sunrise. The classical 7-rings labyrinth represents the path of Mercury, in an average year, as viewed from the Earth. Like all planets, Mercury appears to be moving clockwise ("going direct") in relation to the fixed stars. However, when they come in direct line between the earth and the sun, planets seem to stop and then go in the opposite direction ("going retrograde").**

**Mercury, in most years, goes retrograde 3 times and direct 4 times. This is exactly the circuit of the classical left-handed 7-rings labyrinth.**

**As explained by Sig Lonegren: *"(in the diagram), the line that bisects the labyrinth is the line between us here on earth, and the sun. Imagine yourself standing at the mouth of the labyrinth, and that you are looking at the sun which is at the other end of the line. When Mercury is to the left of this line it is trailing the sun, and therefore an 'evening star'. When it is to the right of the line, it is leading the sun and therefore, a 'morning star'."***

**The 1st path (at the entrance of the labyrinth diagram) is when Mercury starts the year as a morning star, in January. The 1st path is an incomplete loop because it does not double back on itself as the other paths will do during the year. The other part of the 1st path is the 8th path or line connecting the center (8) back to (1) to begin the new year again.**

**Mark Breen, Curator of the Planetarium at the Fairbanks Museum, Vermont, explains: *"If you were going to design something to assist you in deciding when are the best times to see the planet Mercury, the labyrinth is a good design."* The 7-rings labyrinth seems to indicate that our ancestors were able to easily chart the movements of Mercury, the planet of communication. Roman Mercury was the Greek Hermes and the Egyptian Thoth. In later times, Hermes became known as the wisdom-teacher Hermes Trimegistus.**

# SG304A.1.8.1 Varieties of 7-Rings Laby (1)

**The Baltic-type labyrinth** (Baltic Wheel) is found on the shores of the Baltic Sea. It is a labyrinth with choices as it has the traditional long path to the center starting on the left but also a short path on the right, leading directly to the center of the labyrinth. An extant example is the *"Rad"* in Germany (see infra).

The choices make this design ideal for group ceremonial, processional or intentional uses. An individual walker has the choice of the traditional long path in and long path out, or any combination of long and short paths to complete their personal journey. Two or more walkers can enter the labyrinth on opposite ends or at pre-set times.

This is a relatively simple reconnection of the upper part of the classical seed pattern in order to produce a double spiral at the centre with separate entrance and exit paths.

(Credit)

**The Chakra-Vyuha type labyrinth** is found primarily in India. It is based on a 3-fold, rather than a 4-fold seed pattern and so is designed with a spiral at the centre.

It is referred to, in the Indian tradition, as *Chakra-vyuha*, the name of the strategic troop formation used by the magician Drona at the battle of Kurukshetra, as narrated in the *Mahabharata* epic. (See infra).

# SG304A.1.8.2 Varieties (2) Tracing the 7-rings Chakra Vyuha

**This labyrinth has a triangle as a basic pattern. It has only two turning points and a centre that looks like a spiral. Then one must add only some more sections to the basic triangle.**

**The seed pattern is an equilateral triangle whose sides are divided into 4 equal segments. The midpoints of the 3 sides are connected to form a concave triangle and the extreme points are connected with a curved line. (See below "seed pattern").**

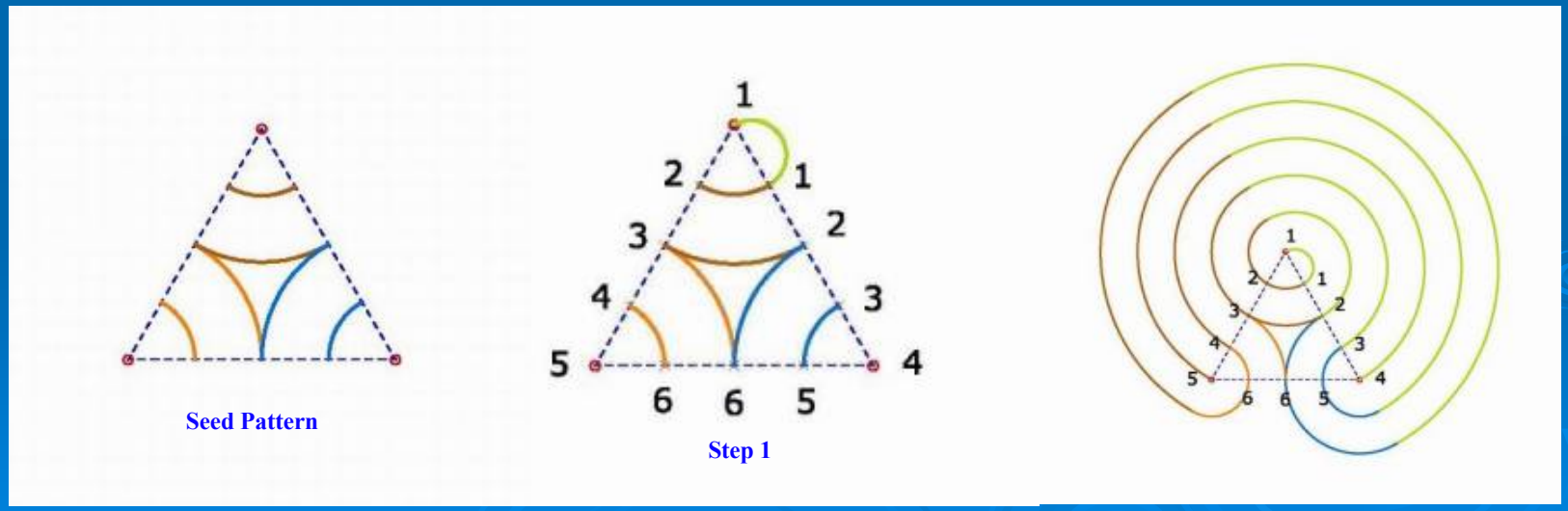
**Step 1:** With a curved clockwise line, connect the top point (1) with the free end 1 of the curved arc 2 to 1.

**Step 2:** Then proceed along to connect with curved near-circle lines the same numbers from left to right: 2 to 2, 3 to 3 etc…

**Step 3:** At the end, adjust the lines 5 and 6.

**The result is a labyrinth with two turning points and 5 circuits. This labyrinth has another feel than the classical 7-circuit labyrinth. How different? The spiral dynamics at the center is a vortex dance.**

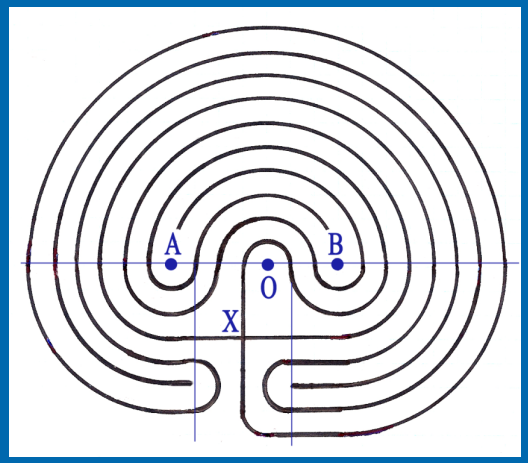
**After entering the middle of the labyrinth with path 3, the journey proceeds first outward (paths 3 - 4 - 5) and then inwards (paths 4 - 5 - 6) The path sequence is: 3 − 2 − 1 − 4 − 5 − 6.**




**Seed pattern, first step and completed labyrinth. (Credit).**

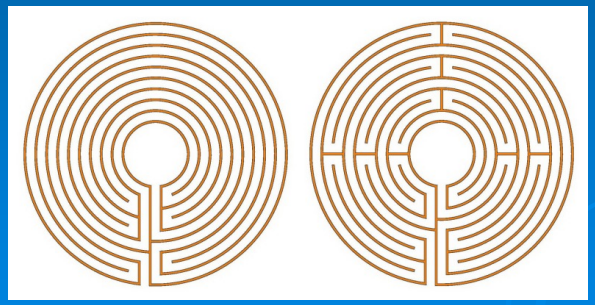
# SG304A.1.9 The 9-Rings Laby - The Path

Nine is the number of completion and fulfillment, the magnified Sacred Triad, traditionally called "The Horizon". [◆SG202]
Although not "classical", the 9-rings labyrinth and its variants have a powerful appeal as a full cycle journey




← 9-rings labyrinth design.

Tracing. Step 1: From center O, trace upper half-circles (above the horizontal line).
Step 2: From A, trace quarter circles on the bottom left.
Step 3: From B, trace quarter circles on the bottom right.
Step 4: Trace the 90° cross, with center X.
Step 5: Adjust the various end-curves.



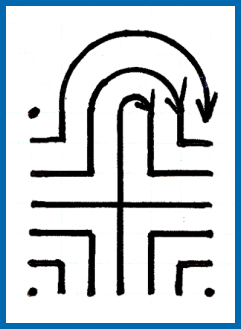
← Two variations on the 9-rings Chartres-type.

(Credit)

The "Hanover" is an adaptation by the Labyrinth Company of a labyrinth variant which appeared in prehistory around the shores of the Baltic Sea in present-day Germany, Poland and Scandinavia.
Incorporating the even-older double spiral symbol, the Hanover labyrinth can be walked in several different ways, making it a very flexible meditation tool. Entering to the left and making one's way to the center, a walker can exit via the shorter double-spiral arm. By bearing to the right on the shorter arm, the labyrinth can be walked again and again.
Or the labyrinth can be walked in the more traditional way, retracing the entry path back out.

↑ 9-rings labyrinth at The Sanctuary, Cornville, AZ.

9-rings labyrinth seed pattern. →



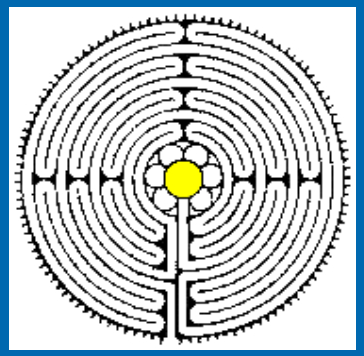
↑ 9-rings labyrinth configuration by Alana Forest. The "Horizon". (Credit).

↑ Medieval 9-rings labyrinth. Cambridgshire, England. First cut in 1660. The turf is the path. (Jeff Saward/Labyrinthos).

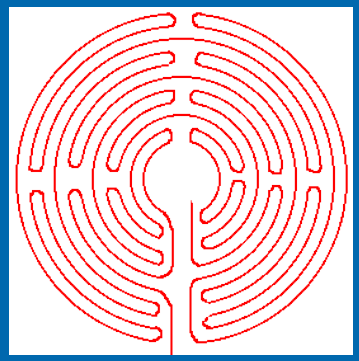
# SG304A.1.10 The 11-Rings Laby - Path & Patterns

The quintessential 11-rings labyrinth is the medieval labyrinth at Chartres Cathedral. We are devoting a section to it in chapter 3, including an analysis of its harmonic pulse (or "rhythm") by J. Hébert.

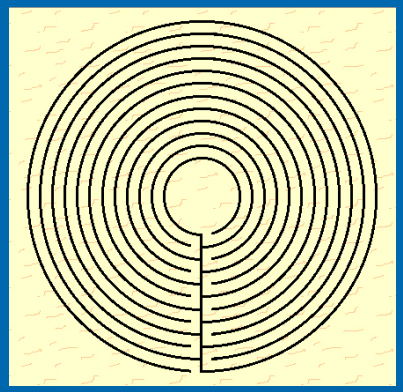
As we have seen, there are other designs based on the Chartres model (the "canonical" 11-rings labyrinths), both historically existing (Sens, Reims) and mathematically possible. And there are 11-rings designs unrelated to the Chartres model.



↑ Chartres labyrinth. Animation of path. (Credit)

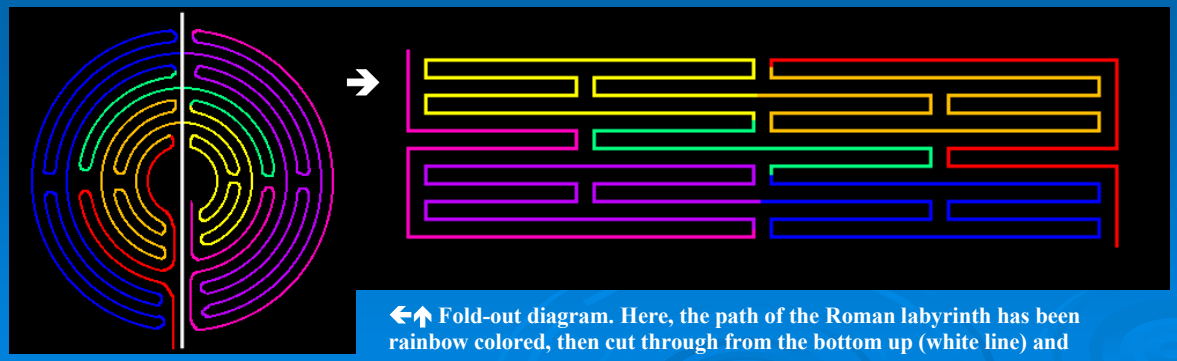


↑ Chartres labyrinth. Path.



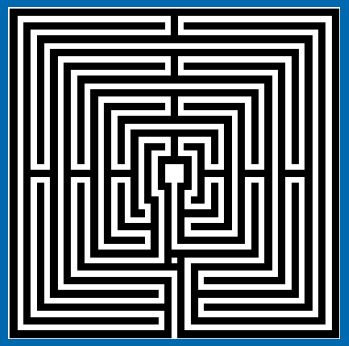
**The numerical order for walking the 11-circuit labyrinth is: 5-2-3-4-1-6-11-8-9-10-7-12 (12 being the center).**

← The most simple 11-rings labyrinth, with an alternating path. Each path re-turns onto the next. This is called *"boustrophedon"* (like an ox drawing a plough across a field and turning at the end of each row to go in the opposite direction.)

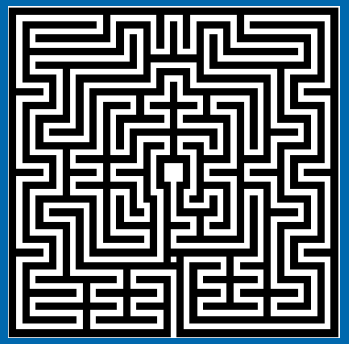


↑ Color coded path. (Credit)

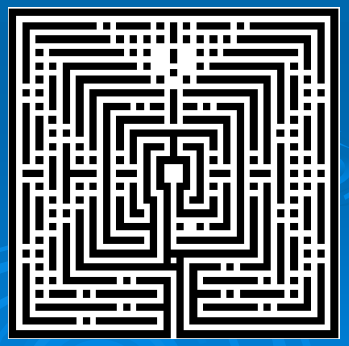
←↑ Fold-out diagram. Here, the path of the Roman labyrinth has been rainbow colored, then cut through from the bottom up (white line) and uncurled into a rectangle. The start is red. (Credit)



↑ Chartres (square version)



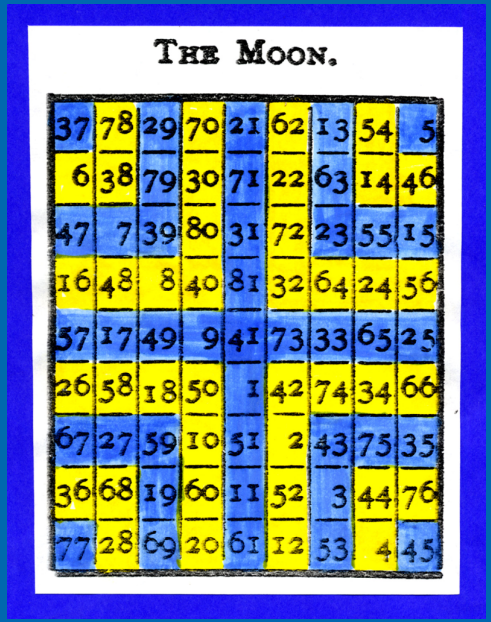
↑ St. Omer



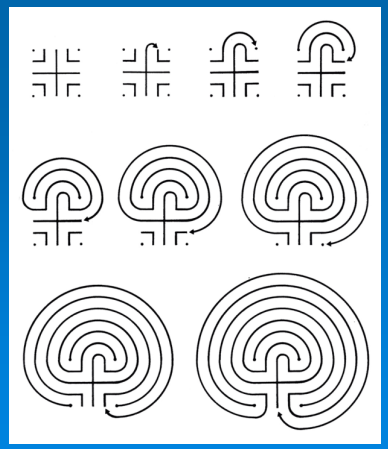
→ Parts common to Chartres and St. Omer. Note: both fit a 49-unit square.

(Source & images Credit)

# SG304A.1.11 Labyrinths & Magic Squares




When connecting the odd (blue) and even (yellow) numbers in the magic square of the Moon, we obtain the exact *seed pattern* used for tracing a 7-ring labyrinth.



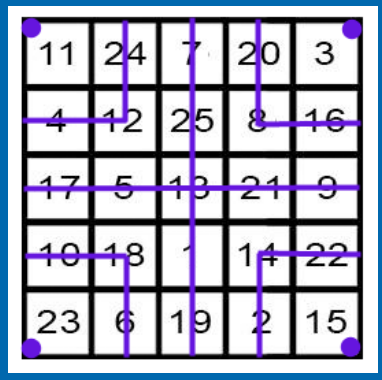
It is a property of the traditional Magic Squares with odd numbers (3 x 3 / 5 x 5 / 7 x 7 / 9 x 9) to have a cruciform (cross-based) pattern of even and odd numbers.

For example, the simplest magic square (Saturn) of 3 x 3 has a cross of 5 odd numbers and 4 even numbers at the four corners. Similarly, the 5 x 5 square (Mars) has a central cross of 9 odd numbers, four quadrant "L" of even numbers and a single odd number at the four corners. Check it for the 7 x 7 (Venus) and the 9 x 9 (Moon).

The exact match for the 7-rings seed pattern is the 9 x 9 square of the Moon. But, by ignoring the space between center cross/quadrant/corner, we can also assign the square of Mars (5 x 5) to the 7-rings labyrinth; if so, we can then assign the 9 x 9 (Venus) to the classical 11-rings labyrinth. In this case, odd and even numbers alternate.

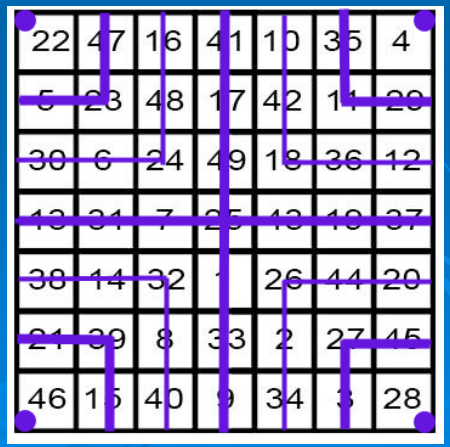
| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 11 | 24 | 7 | 20 | 3 |
| 4 | 12 | 25 | 8 | 16 |
| 17 | 5 | 13 | 21 | 9 |
| 10 | 18 | 1 | 14 | 22 |
| 23 | 6 | 19 | 2 | 15 |

Square of Mars with 7-rings labyrinth seed pattern




| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 22 | 47 | 16 | 41 | 10 | 35 | 4 |
| 5 | 23 | 48 | 17 | 42 | 11 | 29 |
| 30 | 6 | 24 | 49 | 18 | 36 | 12 |
| 13 | 31 | 7 | 25 | 43 | 19 | 37 |
| 38 | 14 | 32 | 1 | 26 | 44 | 20 |
| 21 | 39 | 8 | 33 | 2 | 27 | 45 |
| 46 | 15 | 40 | 9 | 34 | 3 | 28 |

Square of Venus with 11-rings labyrinth seed pattern

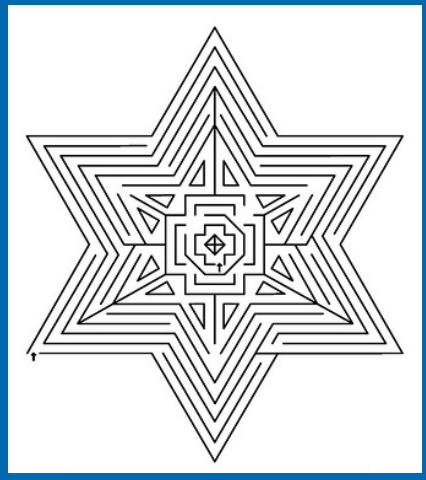


# SG304A.1.12 Shaped Labyrinths

**Most labyrinths are based on the circle or square and some medieval labyrinths are octagonal. However other shapes are actually found or creatively possible.**

Pentagonal Labyrinth. Wikipedia.

www.shutterstock.com



From E-book www.mfave.nl

Credit: shutterstock.com

Irish shamrock laby, celebrating the national symbol of Ireland. (Credit)

Triangular labyrinth by R. Morris. Guggenheim-Bilbao.

# Interlude 1 - The Labyrinth Goddess

**Here is a hair-dressing technique…**

**(“The Goddess”. Sig Lonegren. Les Labyrinthes.)**

# SG304A. Chapter 2. History of Labyrinths

# SG304A.2.1 Origins & Meanings of Labyrinths

The etymology of the word "labyrinth" remains unexplained today. So is the actual origin of the archetypal Labyrinth, whether geographical or cultural. And an old question has been debated for over a century: was the labyrinth design so primordial that it was invented in different cultures independently? Or was a single discovery disseminated by way of migratory and cultural influences? Opinions diverge. H. Kern reminds us that the two hypotheses can converge. He writes: *"It is not unusual for members of one culture to acquire from other cultures ideas that already exist in a nascent form in their own culture (otherwise the foreign idea could not even be understood)."*

A fact is clear: the labyrinth design is not common to all cultures but only appears in certain cultural contexts. Historical evidence seems to point to the Mediterranean Basin as an epicenter of dissemination, and more specifically Minoan Crete. Mycenaean travelers may have spread the design to Spain, England and Ireland. The crusade to India led by Alexander (327 BCE) may have been instrumental in the appearance of labyrinth designs eastwards. From India, labyrinths clearly spread to Java & Sumatra.

Beyond the question of origins, a common agreement among scholars is that, early on, the labyrinth design seems to have had a choreographic function by determining the path of "labyrinth dances". Indeed numerous ancient accounts refer to group dances associated with labyrinths. [See next page].

Several other clusters of associations with labyrinths revolve around the following themes:

- Celestial Representations. Already intuited by early scholars, this association has been discussed at length by Sig Lonegren who likens the labyrinth to the orbit of Mercury as seen from the earth. [See supra: the 7-Rings Laby and the Orbit of Mercury].
- Initiation Rituals. Journeys to the Underworld and the Spirit world.
- Birth facilitation (India).

Other associations will be touched upon in the last chapter The Healing Ways of Labyrinths:

- Protective and ritual Magic.
- Body-mind rhythms and 3D Balance.
- Geomancy & Dowsing.
- Therapeutic & Integrative Uses.

← "Tomba del Labirinto". Sardinia..
(ca. 2500 - 2000 BCE).
Located on the ceiling of an underground chamber.
Attributed to the San Michele culture (third millennium BCE).

Note: the entrance is on the bottom left, next to a trapezoidal door leading into the room behind.

(H. Kern. *Through the Labyrinth*)

# SG304A.2.2.1 Dances of the Labyrinth (1)

Because body movement is a primal, most direct form of expression, it is quite possible that the original design of the labyrinth was a dance pattern or a form of choreographic ritual. Here are some ancient literary and folk tradition references:

• The Greek epic poet Homer (ca. 9th century BCE), in his *Iliad* mentions the *choros* on Achilles' shield and describes it as similar to the dance surface *"which in wide Cnosos Daedalus fashioned of old for fair-tressed Ariadne".*

• Greek historian Plutarch (46 - 120 CE) writes in his *Theseus: "On his voyage from Crete, Theseus put in at Delos… and danced with his youths a dance which they say is still performed by the Delians, being an imitation of the circling passages in the labyrinth, and consisting of certain rhythmic involutions and evolutions."* This Delian Dance has also been described by Greek poet Callimachus of Cyrene (305 – 240 BCE) and was called the *geranos* or Crane Dance.

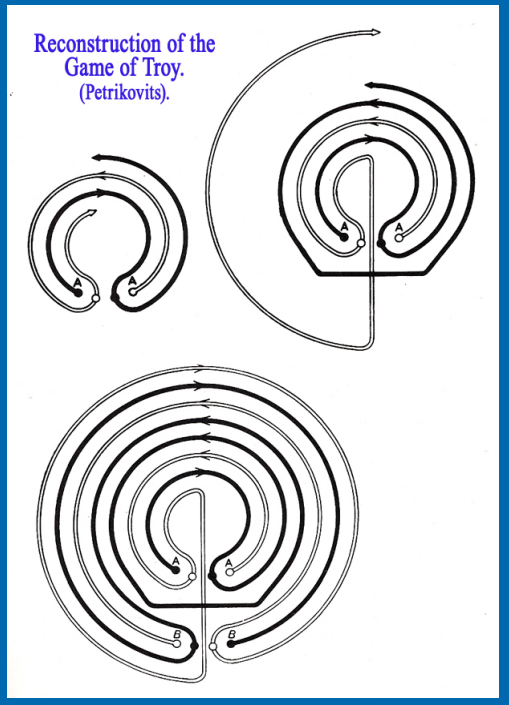
• Julius Pollux, a Greek lexicographer (2nd century CE) reports: *"Theseus danced the first geranos by imitating (with the rescued children) the escape from the labyrinth, around the Delian altar".*

• Latin poet Virgil (70 - 19 BCE) describes the labyrinthine, equestrian Game of Troy (*Lusus Troiae*). It has been noted that *"vernacular traditions across the whole of Europe associate the terms 'Troy', 'Dance' and 'Labyrinth' with each other with astounding consistency"* (J. Rykwert).

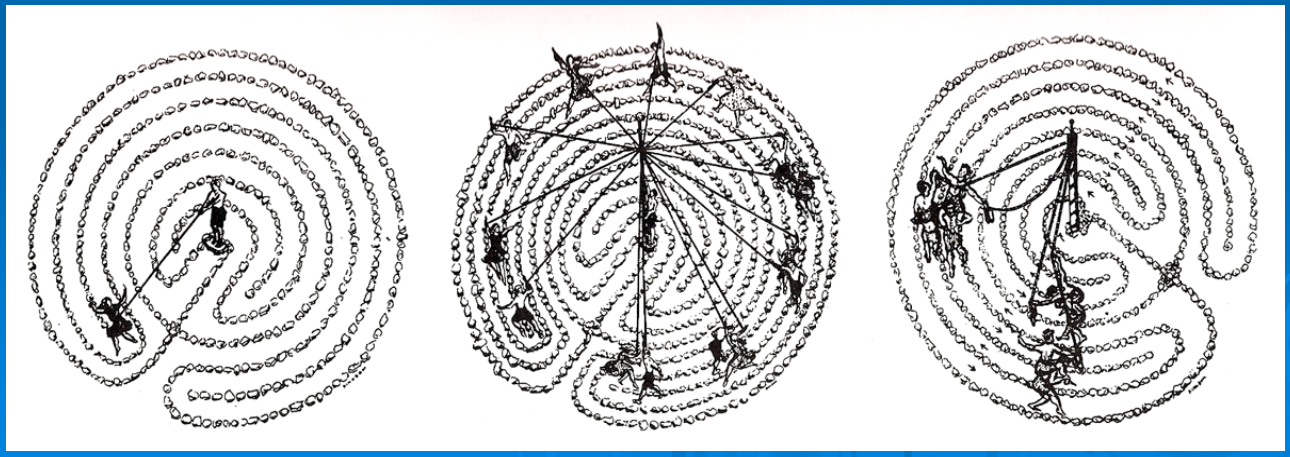
• Nordic regions have a tradition of "Troy Towns" or stone labyrinths associated with ritual "Maiden" dances.

• Medieval cathedrals. Accounts exist of dances in the cathedrals of Auxerre and Sens that the bishop and chapter members were performing around the labyrinth on Easter Sunday.

• The Basque region and South of France have traditions of "snail" dances.




↑ Reconstruction of the Game of Troy by H. von Petriokovits. The lines represent the movement of a group of riders from beginning (A) to end (B).



↑ Labyrinth Dance. Credit.

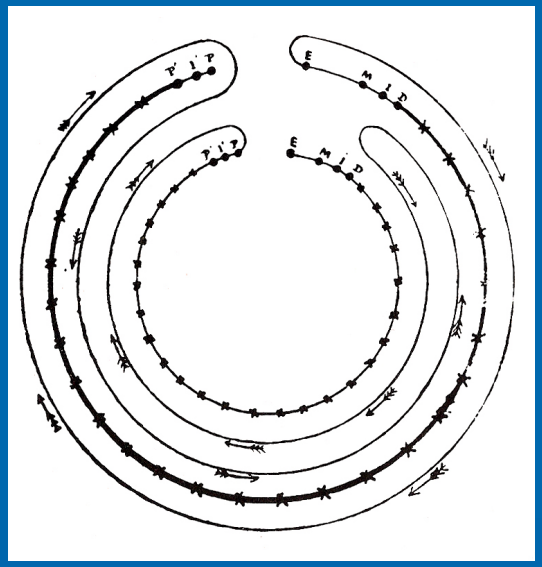
← Possible scenarios of Troy Town Dances, reconstructed by Swedish art historian L-I Ringbom. (H. Kern).

# SG304A.2.2.2 Dances of the Labyrinth (2)

**Below are renditions of folk dances in the Basque region and South of France. According to Wikipedia, there are approximately 400 distinct Basque folk dances, each with its own story and significance.**

**The alternation of paths, the "thread" pattern used by the dance leader and the successive expansion/contraction of the rings offer similarities with the labyrinth design.**

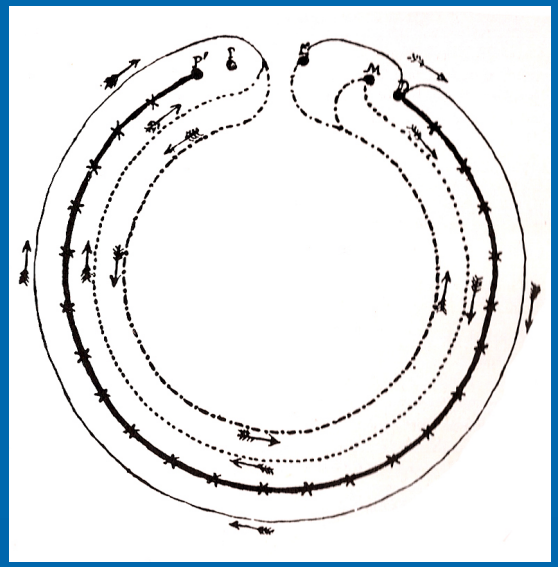
**(Source: H. Kern. *Beyond the Labyrinth*.)**



**↑ This "Snail Dance" (*Caracoiltzia*) was still being performed in the 1920s in the French Basque country at festivities celebrated by the youth of two villages.**

**The male dancers alternate with their partners and form a circular chain. With repeated changes of direction, they trace a serpentine path, the diameter of whose circuits becomes ever smaller.**

**The object was to cause the dance chain to become so convoluted by pushing and pulling that the dance leader would "loose the thread".**

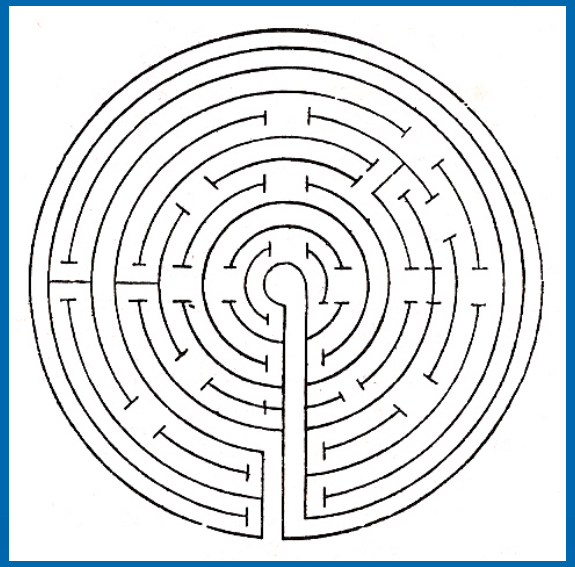


**↑ The Basque "Abduction Dance" is a variation of the Snail Dance.**

**When the first dancer (M) and his partner (D) separate, leaving an opening, the lead dancer (E) uses the opportunity to abduct D.**

**Together, they circle around the stationary chain of dancers while M follows, parallel to them, on the inside of the dance chain.**

**All three meet at the upper left end of the chain, at the opening in the circle.**

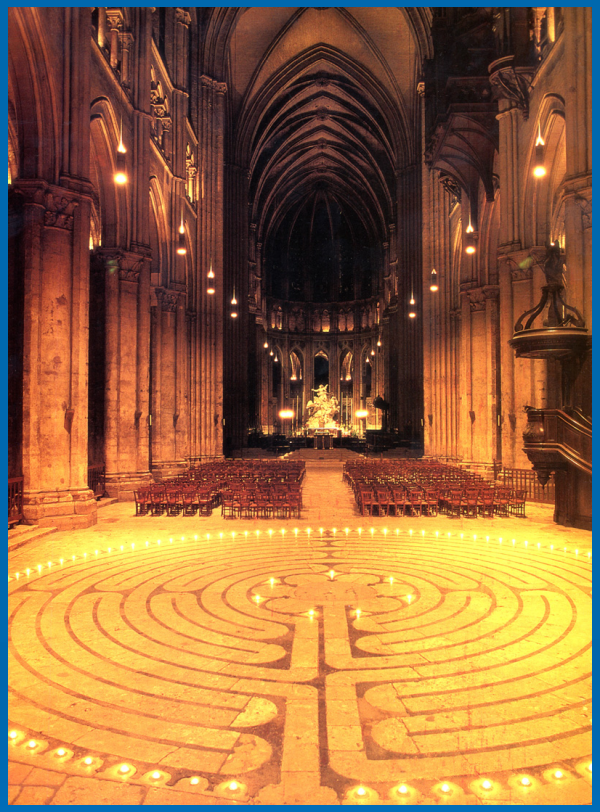


**↑ Sketch of dance movements in Southern France, in the 1930s, by an unknown traveler.**

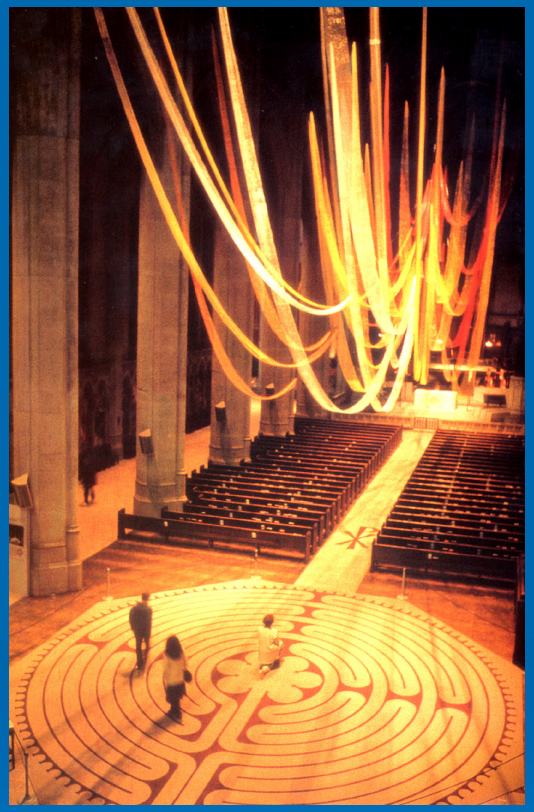
**Published in a magazine, this illustrates a group dance performed at "Mardi Gras", in which a line of dancers trailed beyond a young lead dancer. The dancers were connected by ribbons or handkerchiefs.**

**H. Kern comments: *"The illustrator was obviously influenced by his knowledge of church labyrinths. Also, given the various choices and dead-ends, this is more of a maze than a labyrinth."***

# SG304A.2.3 Cycles of History



Labyrinth.
Chartres Cathedral, France.
ca. 1230.



Labyrinth.
Grace Cathedral, San Francisco.
1990.

**Between these two labyrinths in the above images, there are about 760 years… and one full cycle of history.**
**The fact that labyrinths are re-appearing massively is very auspicious as it points to a global shift of humanity's consciousness.**

The knowledge and understanding of labyrinths - as a technology of wave-guiding the user to their own spirit center - has been undergoing short periods of public acceptance between long periods of ignorance.

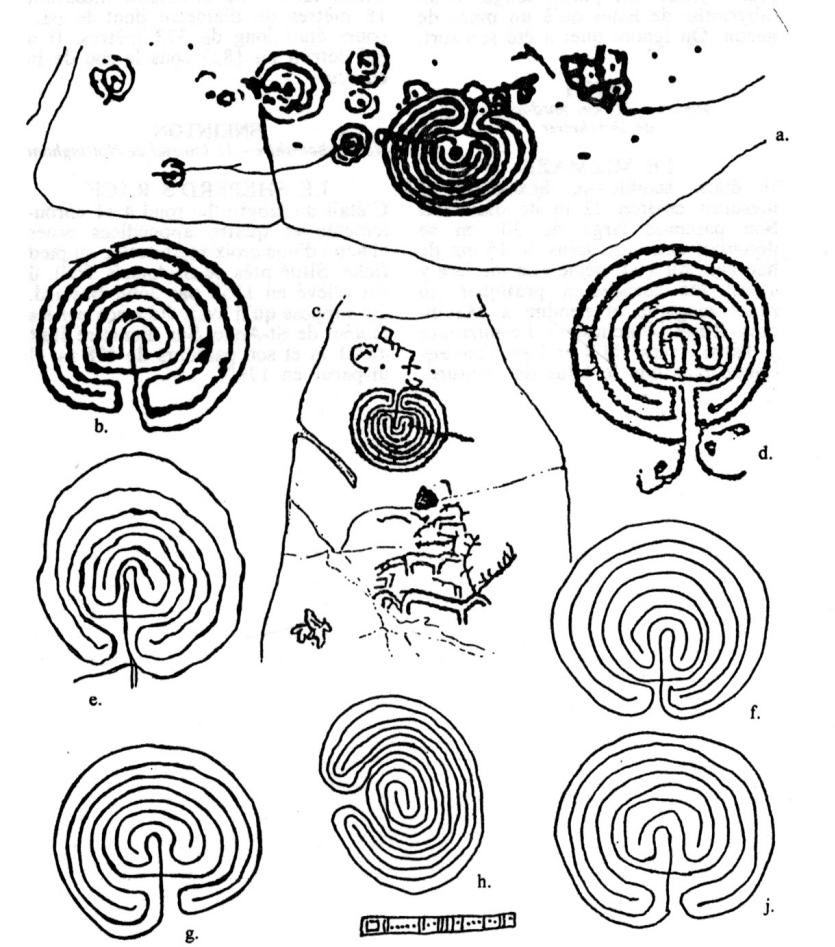
In Europe, the 11th, 12th and 13th centuries were a period of Spiritual Re-awakening. Due to the Crusades (8 crusades, 1096 to 1270), the establishment of new secular (Templars, 1119-1314) and religious (Cistercians, 1115-) orders and the overall trans-cultural exchanges between the Islamic, Jewish & Christian cultures, ancient knowledge was revived and spread throughout Europe to be applied to the building of magnificent monuments to Sacredness.

Then this knowledge was quite suddenly lost again.

Generally speaking, throughout history, the knowledge and world-view of Sacred Geometry has been cyclically going underground (implicate format) in times of materialization of consciousness and, in turn, re-emerging in the open (explicate format) in times of re-awakening and expansion of consciousness.

We are, right now, in such a time of re-awakening, where the sense of Sacredness is re-emerging again and is re-imprinting the global consciousness. The appearance, disappearance and re-appearance of Labyrinths is a typical sign.

# SG304A.2.4.1 Petroglyph Labyrinths (1)




ESPAGNE : a. b. San Xurxo de Mogor - c. Armenteira – ITALIE : d. Campanine - e. Benetutti – GRANDE-BRETAGNE : f. Tintagel – IRLANDE : g. Hollywood – SUÈDE : h. Skarv – INDE : j. Padugula.

↑ Petroglyph labyrinths in Europe.
(P. de Saint-Hilaire. *L'Univers Secret du Labyrinthe.*)

↑ Atlantic Bronze Age labyrinth. Galicia, Spain.
ca. 2,000 BCE. (Sketched on the left as "c"). (Wikipedia).

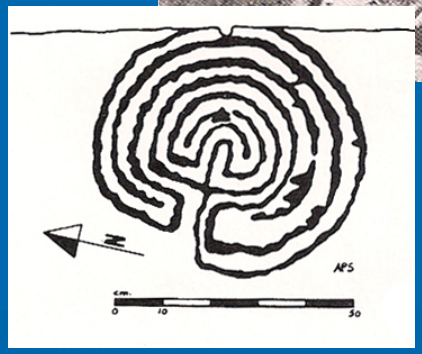
# SG304A.2.4.2 Petroglyph Labyrinths (2)

↑➔ Labyrinth petroglyphs at Mogor, Galicia, Spain. ca. 2,000 BCE.

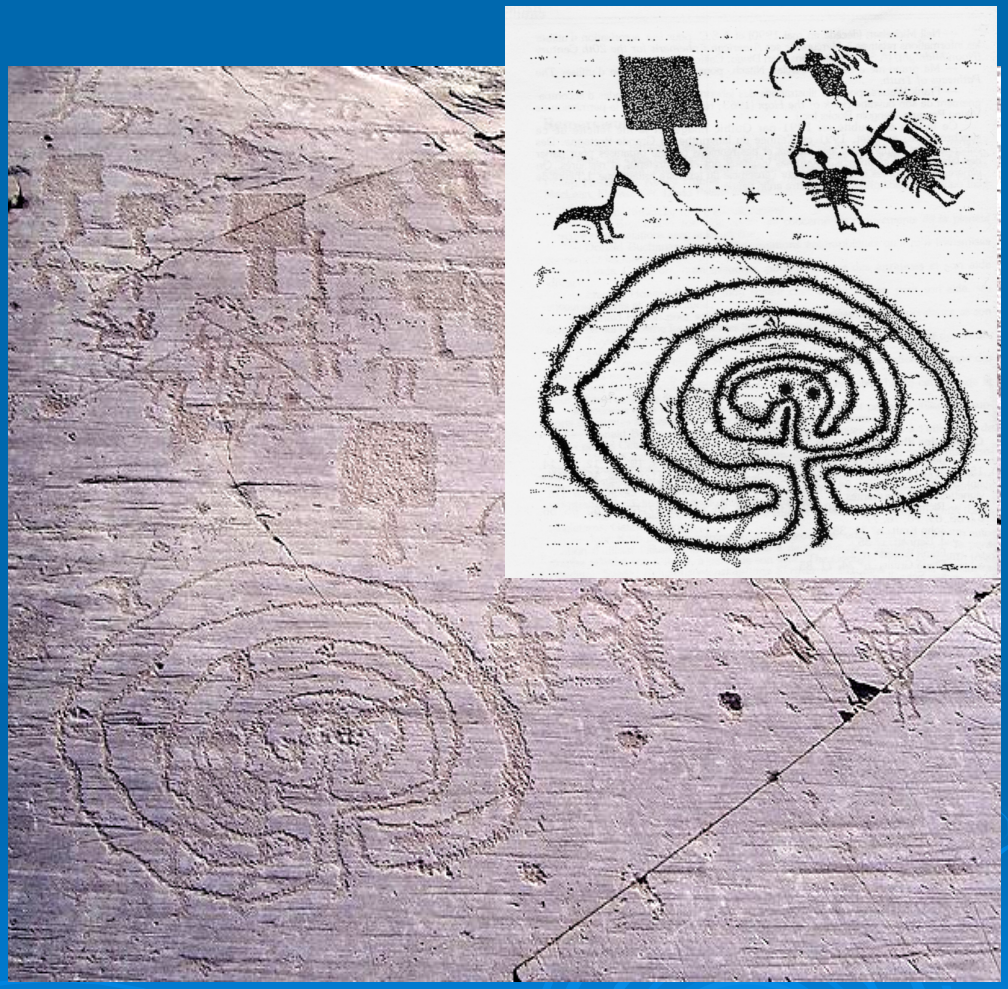
(Wikimedia images).

← Rock labyrinth at Mogor. (Credit)

# SG304A.2.4.3 Petroglyph Labyrinths (3)



← ↑ Pedra dos Campinos.
San Xurxo de Mogor, Galicia, Spain.
Late Bronze Age (ca. 900 - 500 BCE).
(H. Kern. *Through the Labyrinth*)

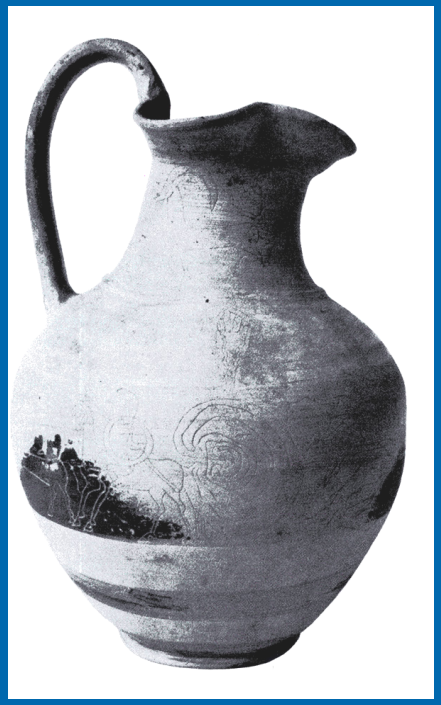


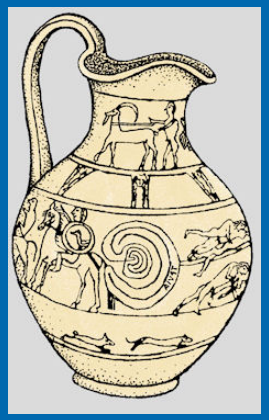
↑ Val Camonica, Northern Italy. ca. 1500 BC.
(Credits: Image - Wikipedia.
Sketch - Sig Lonegren. *Les Labyrinthes.*)

→ Dos del Merichi, Italy. The labyrinth designs seem to be magical symbols for successful hunting.

(www.labyrinthos.net)

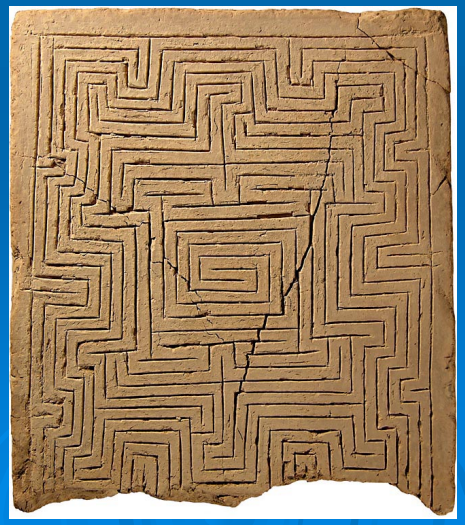
# SG304A.2.5 Ancient Clay/Pottery Labyrinths

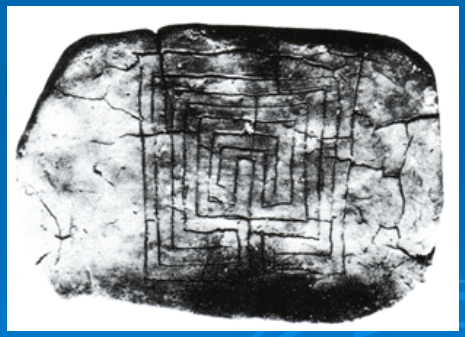




↑→ Etruscan vase. 600 BC. (H. Kern. *Through the Labyrinth*.)

↑ Syrian pottery. 1300 BCE. Tell Rifa'at, Syria.





← Pylos (Greece) clay tablet. Square 7-rings labyrinth. (Credit)

← Labyrinth of square and symmetric form with entrances at the middle of opposite sides, only one of them leading to the centre. MS3194 in Old Babylonian on clay. Babylonia. 2000-1700 BC. (Credit)

# SG304A.2.6.1 The "Egyptian Labyrinth" (1)

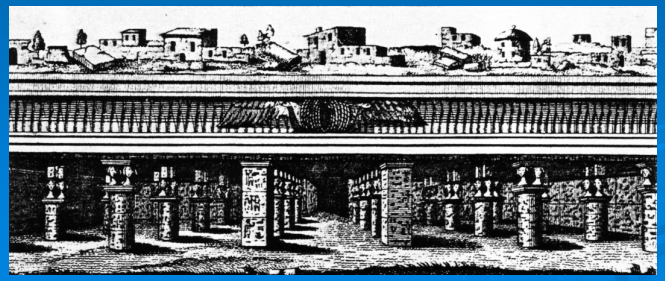
The oldest structure, in recorded written history, to which the label *labyrinth* has been applied is the *Egyptian Labyrinth*. Herodotus, a Greek traveler and historiographer, visited it in the 5th c. BCE and recorded his observations in Book II of his Histories. Herodotus was in high esteem about it, stating, *"I found it greater than words could tell, for although the temple at Ephesus and that at Samos are celebrated works, yet all the works and buildings of the Greeks put together would certainly be inferior to this labyrinth as regards labor and expense."* Herodotus added that even the Pyramids at Giza were eclipsed by the Egyptian Labyrinth.

Herodotus describes the entire building as surrounded by a wall and contained 12 courts with 3,000 chambers. On one side of the labyrinth was a pyramid 243 feet high. The temple was in two levels with half of the rooms above ground and the rest below. *"I was taken through the rooms in the upper storey, so what I shall say of them is from my own observation, but the underground ones I can speak of only from report, because the Egyptians in charge refused to let me see them, as they contain the tombs of the kings who built the labyrinth, and also the tombs of the sacred crocodiles. The upper rooms, on the contrary, I did actually see, and it is hard to believe that they are the work of men; the baffling and intricate passages from room to room and from court to court were an endless wonder to me, as we passed from a courtyard into rooms, from rooms into galleries, from galleries into more rooms and thence into yet more courtyards. The roof of every chamber, courtyard, and gallery is, like the walls, of stone. The walls are covered with carved figures, and each court is exquisitely built of white marble and surrounded by a colonnade."*

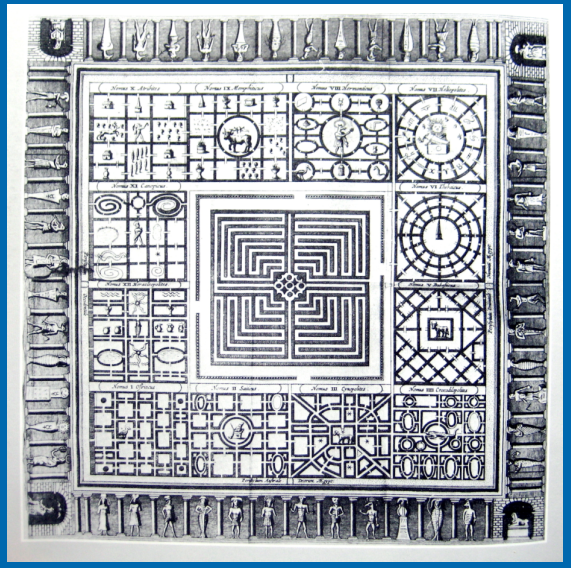
The Greek geographer Strabo (64 BCE - 24 BC) is the only other eyewitness to the Egyptian Labyrinth whose account has survived. He wrote that it had many great courts, each with its own entrance, but that *"in front of the entrances are crypts, as it were, which are long and numerous and have winding passages communicating with one another, so that no stranger can find his way either into any court or out of it without a guide."*

In 1700 a European traveler named Paul Lucas visited the site and published an account of the remains, including sketches, as he saw them. Over a century later K.R. Lepsius led an expedition and uncovered a series of brick chambers which he identified as the labyrinth. When Professor Flinders Petrie explored the site in 1888, he identified the wall found by Lepsius as the remains of a Roman town and then went on to find the foundation of the actual labyrinth which measured 1,000 feet long by 800 feet wide. Archaeologists now believe that the temple was built by Amenemhat III (12th Dynasty, 1860 BC - 1814 BCE).

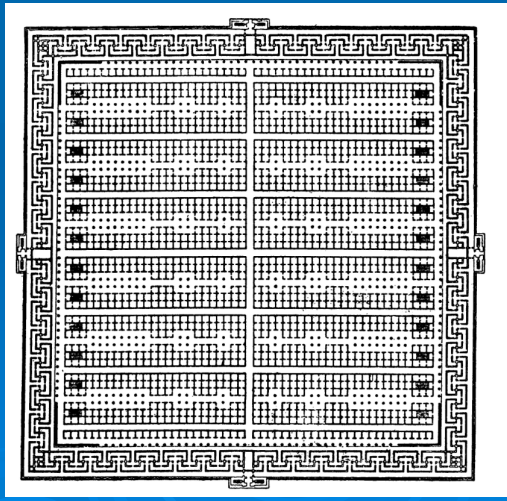
The Napoleon Egypt Expedition and later travelers left fancy sketches of the "Egyptian Labyrinth".



← Sketch from the Description of Egypt. Napoleon expedition.

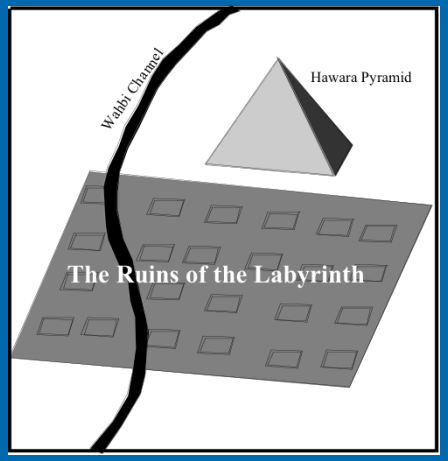


↑ Rendition of the Egyptian Labyrinth by Athanasius Kircher (1601-1680 CE).



↑ Rendition of the Egyptian Labyrinth by Luigi Canina.

# SG304A.2.6.2 The "Egyptian Labyrinth" (2)

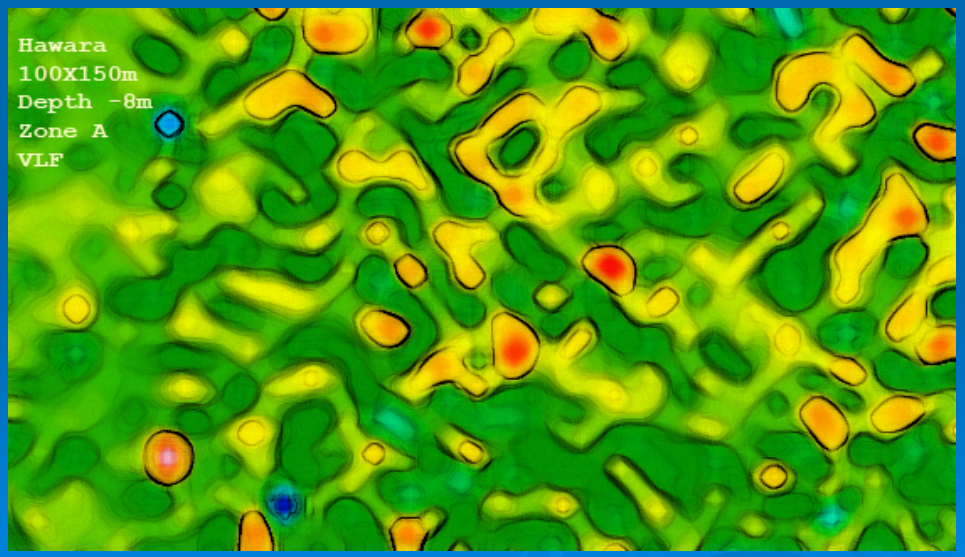



**The Mataha expedition, in 2008, was a geo-physical research project at Hawara, the site of the Egyptian labyrinth, to bring the latest technology to the legendary building lost under the sands for 2,000 years. The project brought together science, art and archeology.**

**Backed by the sales of his *Golden Sun Disc*, an "archeological artifact of the future", the visionary leader of the expedition, Louis de Cordier, launched a joint effort to scan some areas of the Hawara site, below the "foundation" found by Petrie. The work was done under the auspices of the Ghent University in Belgium and the National Research Institute of Astronomy and Geophysics (NRIAG) in Cairo. The results, although withdrawn by the Egyptian department of Antiquities, were partially released on the expedition's website: www.labyrinthofegypt.com.**

***"The Mataha expedition geophysical research confirms the presence of archaeological features at the labyrinth area south of the Hawara pyramid of Amenemhet III. These features covering an underground area of several hectares, have the prominent signature of vertical walls on the geophysical results. The vertical walls with an average thickness of several meters, are connected to shape nearly closed rooms, which are interpreted to be huge in number."***

***"Underneath this upper zone, below the artificial stone surface appears (in spite of the turbid effect of the groundwater) at the depth of 8 to 12 meters A GRID STRUCTURE OF GIGANTIC SIZE MADE OF A VERY HIGH RESISTIVITY MATERIAL LIKE GRANIT STONE. This states the presence of a colossal archaeological feature below the labyrinth "foundation" zone of Petrie, which has to be reconsidered as the ROOF OF THE STILL EXISTING LABYRINTH. The conclusion of the geo-archaeological expedition counters in a scientific way the idea that the labyrinth was destructed as a stone quary in Ptolemaic times and validates the authenticity of the classical author reports."*** **(www.labyrinthofegypt.com)**




**↑ Scan at a depth of - 8m, revealing a "labyrinth-like" grid structure.**

**↑ View of the site at ground surface level.**

# SG304A.2.7 Greek Labyrinths

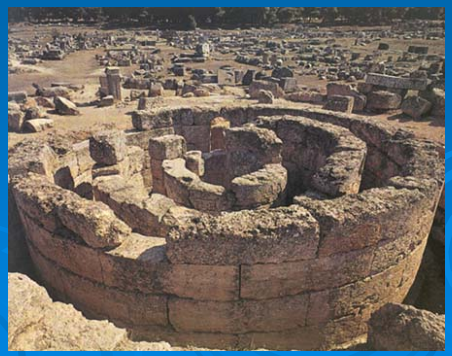
↑ Greek coins from Knossos, Greece. 4th -2nd century BC.
(Hermann Kern. *Through the Labyrinth*.)

In Epidaurus (3), a Greek healing center [see the Epidaurus Theater with Fibonacci ratios ◆SG207], there was a circular building called the "Tholos" with an unknown purpose. However, the remaining foundation of the Tholos was shaped more like a labyrinth. It is said that the patients would follow the meanders of the Tholos in order to be released from their afflictions.

← Aerial view of the Tholos.

(Credit: trentu.ca)

↓ Reconstructed plan of the Tholos.



← The Tholos. Foundations of the core structure. (Credit)

# SG304A.2.8.1 Theseus & the Minotaur (1)

In Greek mythology, the Labyrinth was an elaborate structure designed by legendary architect Daedalus for King Minos of Crete. Its function was to hold the Minotaur, a mythical creature that was half man and half bull and was eventually killed by the Athenian hero Theseus.

"Theseus and the Minotaur". Detail (right side).
Chest ("cassone") painting. Early 16th c. Maitre des Cassoni Campana.

Full painting.

The anonymous artist known as "Maitre des cassoni Campana" illustrated in this painting the episodes of the legend concerning Theseus and the Minotaur.

1. The minotaur, born from the love of Pasiphaé with a bull, terrorizes the Cretan countryside, killing people.
2. The minotaur is captured to be imprisoned in the labyrinth built by Daedalus, a famous architect.
3. The vessel from Athens brings to Crete a tribute of 7 young men and 7 young girls to feed the minotaur. Athens was defeated by Minos, king of Crete.
4. Theseus, son of the Aegeus (king of Athens), meets with the two daughters of Minos: Ariadne and Phaedra.
5. Theseus walks to the labyrinth as the hero of the day.
6. Ariadne, who has given Theseus a magic thread (see the ring attached to the entrance of the labyrinth), and Phaedra wait for the conclusion of the fight.
7. Theseus kills the minotaur and gets out of the labyrinth by following the magic thread given by Ariadne.
8. Theseus and the two sisters walk to the palace of Minos.
9. The Athenian vessel takes Theseus and the sisters to Athens. But Theseus forgot to change the sail from black to white in order to signal that he had been victorious. Aegeus, his father, falsely understood that Theseus was dead and threw himself into the sea (now known as the Aegean sea).

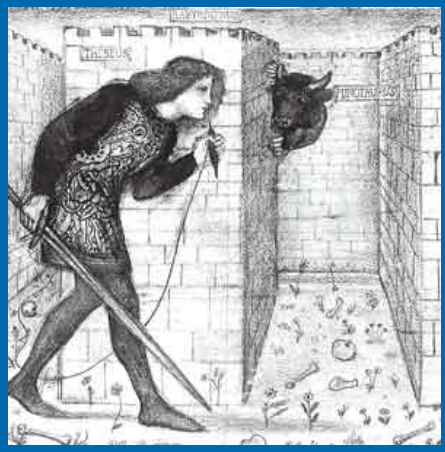
# SG304A.2.8.2 Theseus & the Minotaur (2)

From Classical times through the Renaissance, the Minotaur appears at the center of many depictions of the Labyrinth. Whereas, in classical art, the Minotaur is commonly represented with the body of a man and the head and tail of a bull, later versions show the reverse of the classical configuration: a man's head and torso on a bull's body, reminiscent of a centaur. This alternative tradition survived into the Renaissance, and still figures in contemporary labyrinth depictions.

↑ Theseus within a circular meander maze. Greek kylix.

↓→ Fribourg, Switzerland. ca. 200-225 CE. (H. Kern.)

↑ Loig. Austria. ca. 275-300 CE. (H. Kern. *Through the Labyrinth*.)

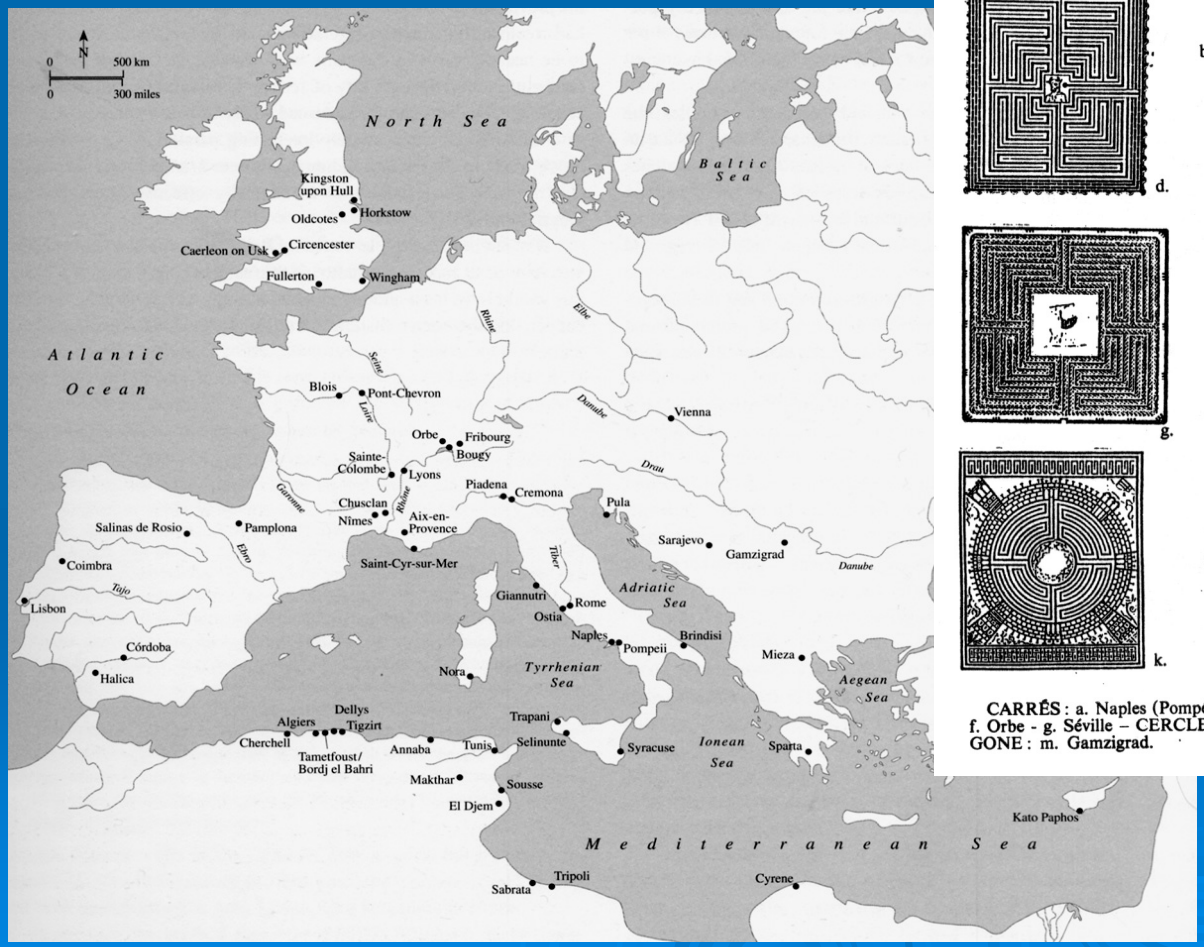


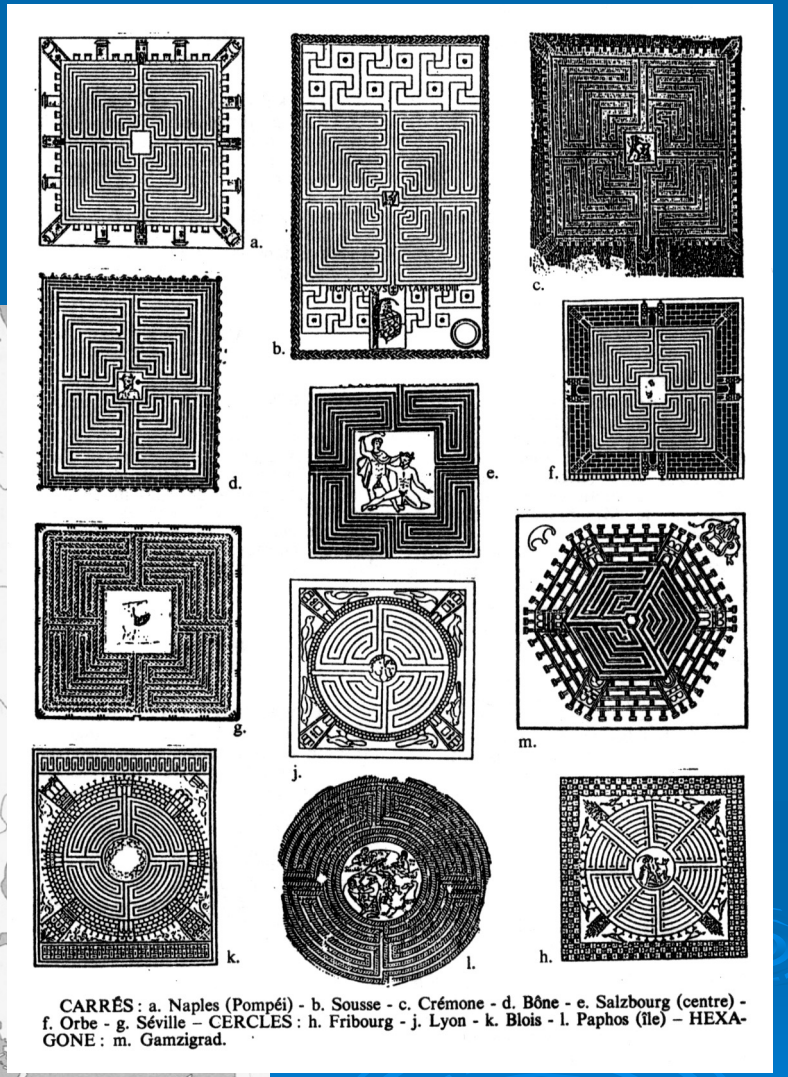
↑ The symbolism of the minotaur is multi-level [◆SG305]. It could be summed up by saying: the search for the bull is the quest for the divine hidden in the incarnated nature. Recall the Zen story of the Ten Bulls. [◆SG305] Art by Burnes.

↑ The Minotaur in the Labyrinth. Engraving of the 16th century. Palazzo Strozzi, Florence.

# SG304A.2.9.1 Roman Labyrinths (1)

**Distribution map of extant Roman mosaic labyrinths.**
**(H. Kern. *Through the Labyrinth*.)**

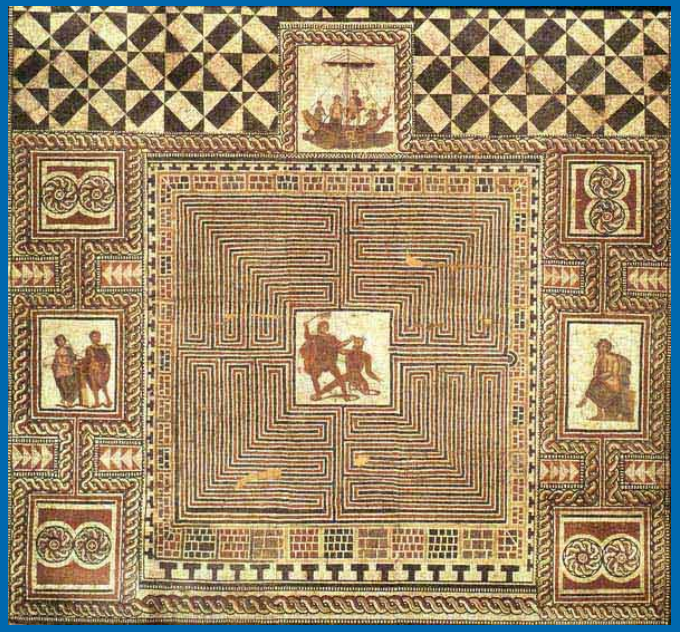



CARRÉS : a. Naples (Pompéi) - b. Sousse - c. Crémone - d. Bône - e. Salzbourg (centre) - f. Orbe - g. Séville – CERCLES : h. Fribourg - j. Lyon - k. Blois - l. Paphos (île) – HEXAGONE : m. Gamzigrad.

**Roman labyrinths.**
**(P. de Saint-Hilaire. *L'Univers Secret du Labyrinthe.*)**

# SG304A.2.9.2 Roman Labyrinths (2)



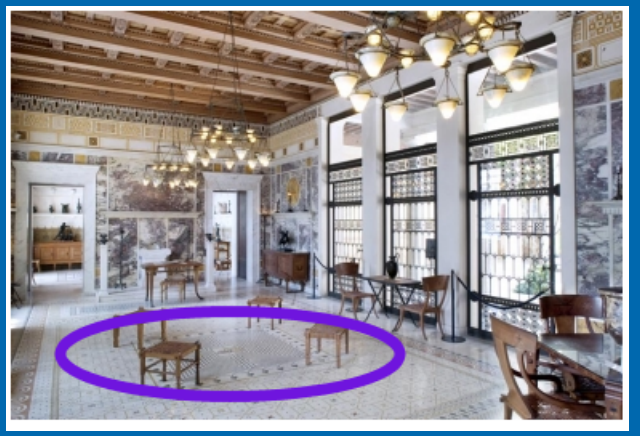
↑ 3rd century roman mosaic. Loig, Austria. (Credit)

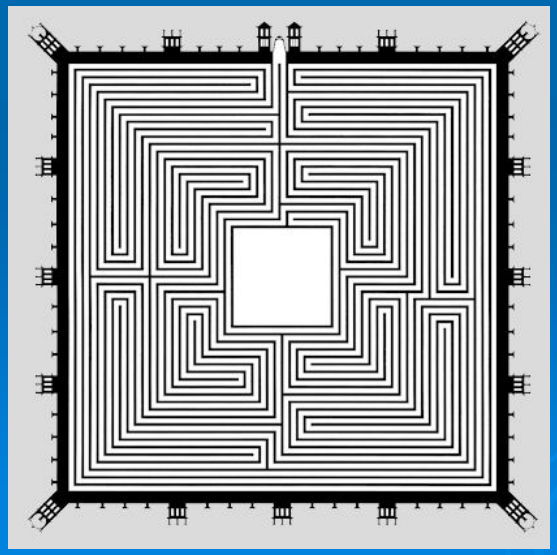
In Beaulieu-sur-Mer, France, there is a reconstituted Roman villa, the Villa Kerylos.

The room reserved for men, the Andron, displays a floor mosaic in the shape of a labyrinth (shown on the right enclosed by a blue oval).

Below, close-ups of the labyrinth and the centerpiece.

//villa-kerylos.fr





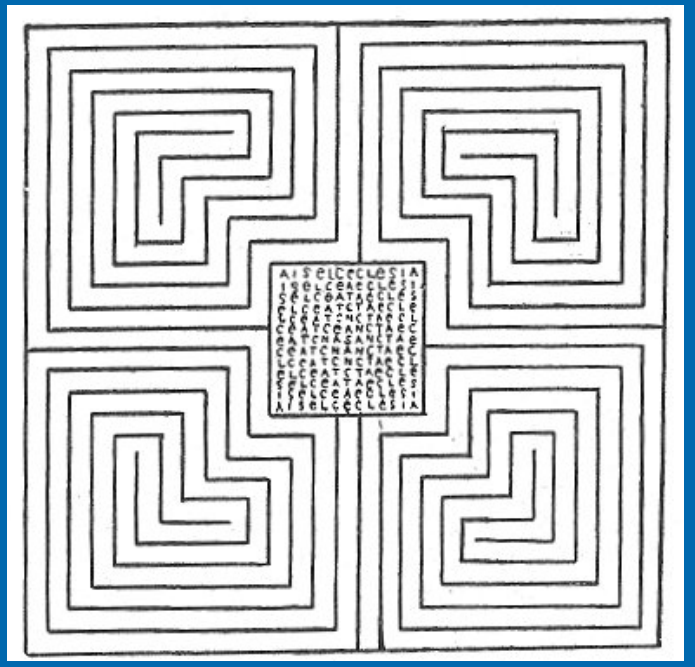
← Roman mosaic laby from Croatia. Single continuous path to center and out by another route.

# SG304A.2.9.3 Roman Labyrinths (3)

**As explained by Jeff Saward in his website labyrinthos.net:**
***"(Roman labyrinths) represent the first real attempts to create different forms of the genre and the first major changes to a symbol that had already been in circulation for some two thousand years."***

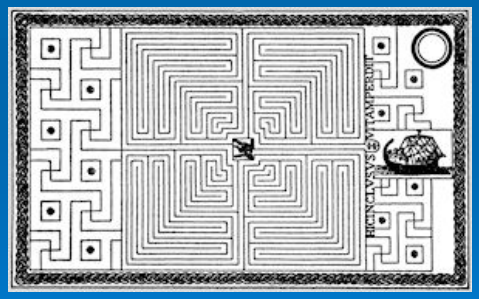
**↑ Roman mosaic labyrinth. (Credit)**
**Ouzouer-Sur-Trézee, Pont Chevron, France.**

**↑ Roman villa mosaic. (Credit)**



**↑ Labyrinth of Saint Reparata of El Asnam (Orleansville), Algeria. (Now found at Algiers cathedral).**
**Descriptive notes from Loyola University / Medieval Studies department:**
***"Looking at the labyrinth of St. Reparata, one will notice that it is unlike its successors in Medieval Europe. While later labyrinths would follow the Cretan model, Saint Reparata is unmistakably Roman, meaning it is square and was originally laid down in 324 CE, making St. Reparata the earliest known church labyrinth in the world. Unique to this object, the labyrinth's center seems to be comprised of a crossword puzzle, but this is actually a palindrome of Sancta Ecclesia (Holy Church). This means that no matter how one reads this phrase, be it forwards or backwards, vertically or horizontally, it will always say the same thing. As a result, this creates a process of reversal in which the mirroring phrases reflect a higher, spiritual, truth. With the phrase Sancta Ecclesia replacing the figures of Theseus and the Minotaur, this early Christian labyrinth is an assertion that while the journey to the center is perilous, the reward for reaching it is not death as in the Greek legend, but eternal life."***

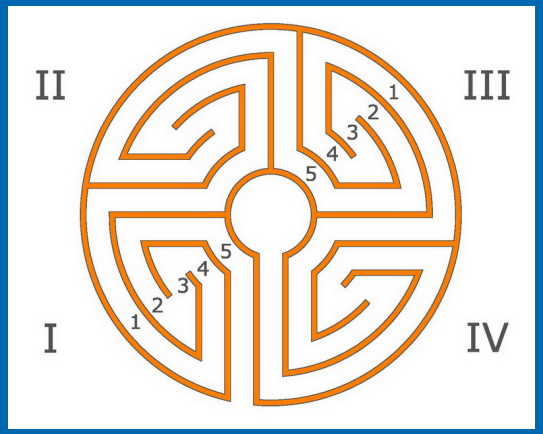
**← Cremona, Villa on the Via Cadolini.**
**1st c. CE. (Credit).**



**↑ Roman mosaic labyrinth.**
**Sousse, Tunisia.**

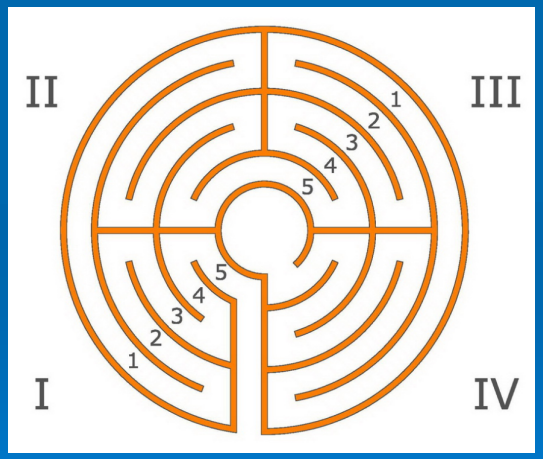
# SG304A.2.9.4 Roman Labyrinths (4) Developments

↑ Mosaic labyrinth, Avenches, Switzerland. 250 BCE. (H. Kern)




One traverses the quadrants in a clockwise direction. The typical path sequence for this labyrinth reads as follows: 5-2-3-4-1-5-2-3-4-1-5-2-3-4-1-5-2-3-4-1.

↑ Palazzo del Te, Sala del Psiche. 1530.




This is a Roman-type labyrinth with 5 circuits. The quadrants are completed entirely one by one. Here the path runs alternately in a serpentine line from the inside outwardly (1st and 3rd quadrant) and then from the outside inwards (2nd and 4th quadrant).
The path sequence expresses it as follows: 5-4-3-2-1-2-3-4-5-4-3-2-1-2-3-4-5.

This is an example of a Roman-type design found in later periods, with a variation from a meander-type path to a serpentine-type path. Both designs are running through each successive quadrant in its entirety.
(Diagrams: Blog from Erwin Reissmann. www.mymaze.de)

↑ Palazzo Ducale. Sala del Labirinto. 1610.

← Relief emblem on the ceiling of a loggia in the castle of Dampierre-sur-Boutonne, France. 1545-1550.

(H. Kern)

# SG304A.2.10.1 Labyrinths in Ancient Manuscripts (1)

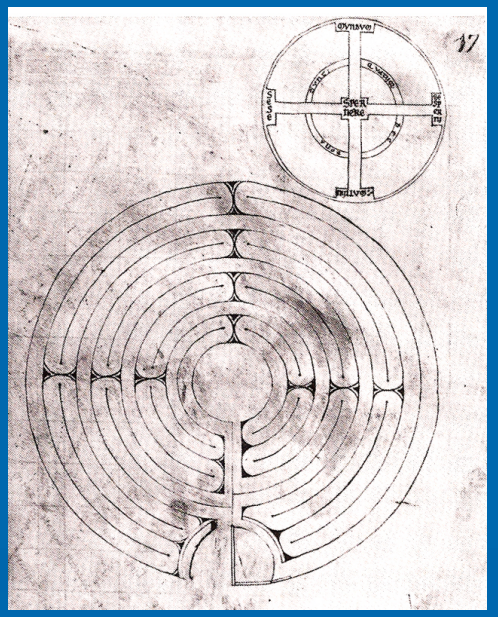
According to H. Kern: ***"Labyrinths are treated in the most important medieval encyclopedias (chronicles and cosmographies). First in Archibishop Isidore of Seville's (ca. 560-636) encyclopedia, then in the works of Boethius and Cassiodorus, which together laid the intellectual foundations of scholarship in the Middle Ages and drew largely on the ancient teachings. The description of the labyrinth is based on Pliny the Elder (23-79 CE), who, in turn, had recourse to the now lost encyclopedia written by Marcus T. Varro (116-27 BCE)."*** **Below are some examples of labyrinth drawings in historical manuscripts.**

**↑➔ Otfrid of Weissenburg. ca. 863.**

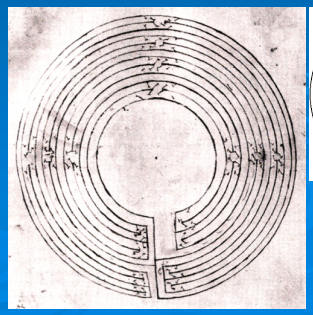
**Polychrome 11-circuit labyrinth. Diameter: 18 cm.**

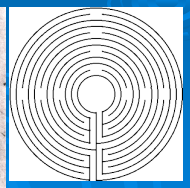
**↑ Wandalbert of Prüm. ca. 850.**
**Cretan-type labyrinth;. Diameter: 12.5 cm.**

**This and following 3 pages: all images from H. Kern.**



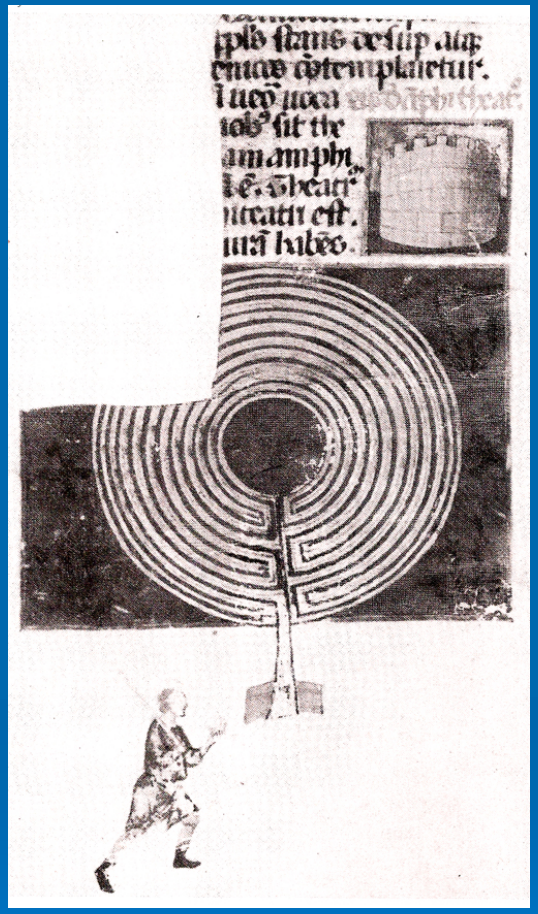
**↑ Isidore de Seville (560-636). Copy of 1072.**
**This May be the exact model for the Chartres labyrinth.**



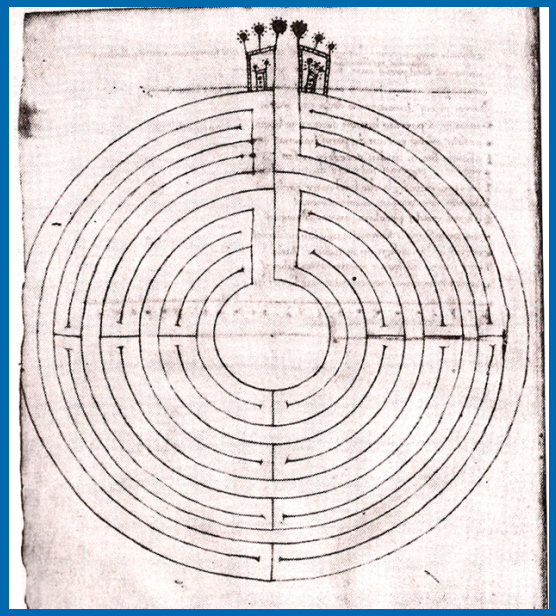


**Heiric of Auxerre. ➔➔ ca. 860.**
**First known model of a Chartres-type labyrinth.**

# SG304A.2.10.2 Labyrinths in Ancient Manuscripts (2)



↑ Copy of Rabanus Maurus's (776-856) *de rerum naturis*.
14th century. 11-circuit labyrinth.



↑ Martianus Capella (4th - 5th century CE).
Chartres-type labyrinth, with entrance at the top, and flanked by towers.

↑ Lambert of St.-Omer (1060 - 1123).
Parchment copy of 15th century.

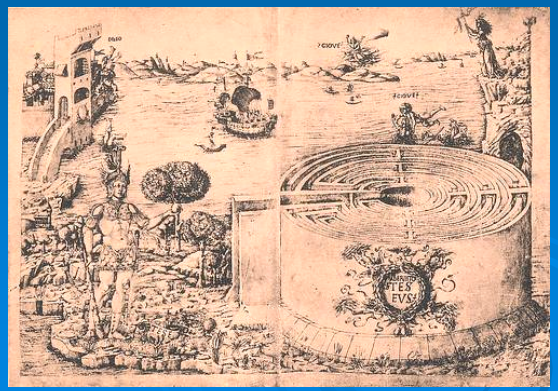
Al-Qazvini's sketch →
of the "City of Constantinople".
ca. 1332.

→
Solomon's labyrinth.
14th - 15th century.

# SG304A.2.10.3 Labyrinths in Ancient Manuscripts (3)

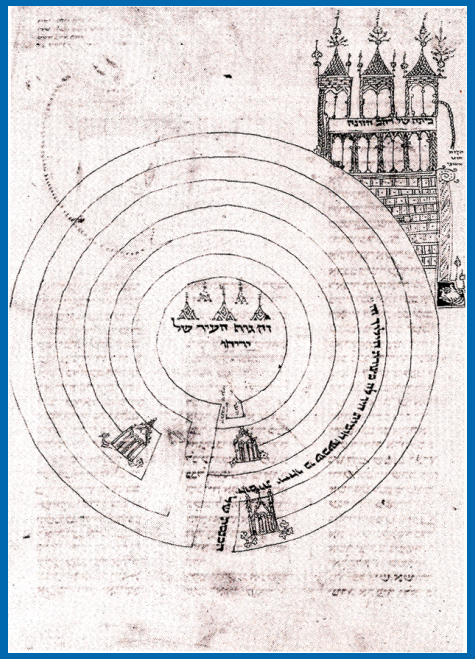
↑ Labyrinth part of the painting by the anonymous "Master Campana". (See supra: Theseus & the Minotaur).

↑ The legend of Theseus. Attributed to Balcio Baldini. Copperplate engraving. ca. 1470.



← Theseus's labyrinth. Attributed to Maso Finiguerra. ca. 1460.
This is the first known 3D representation of a labyrinth.

# SG304A.2.10.4 Labyrinths in Ancient Manuscripts (4)

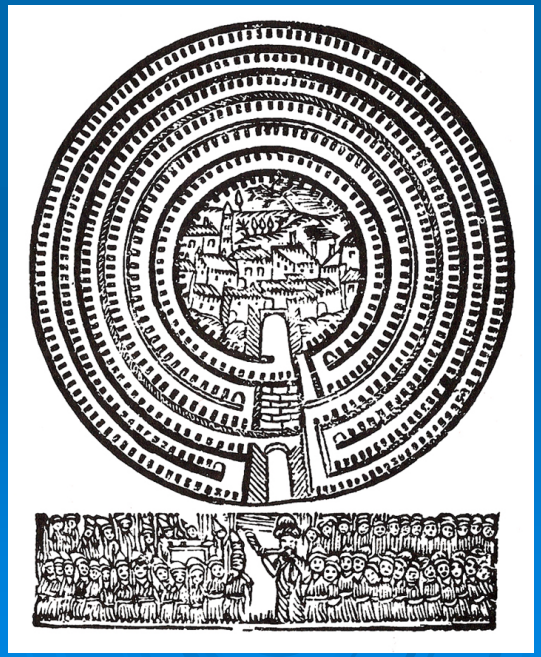


↑ Hebrew Bible:
the labyrinth of Jericho.
ca. 1294.

The labyrinth consists of 6 circuits (but 7 walls), and the 4 loose ends are fortified by towers.

In many medieval manuscripts, the city of JERICHO is represented as a labyrinth.

H. Kern explains: *"The city of Jericho was associated with the labyrinth concept for some 1,000 years, in Roman Catholic Western Europe, in Byzantium, as well as in the Jewish-Syrian region."*



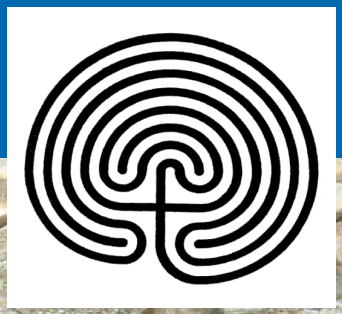
↑ Farhi Bible: the City of Jericho.
ca. 1366-1382.

Modified Cretan-type labyrinth with 6 circuits - and therefore 7 walls.

← The City of Jericho.
Woodcut From Hebrew book. 1743.

A 6-circuits labyrinth - again assuming 7 walls.
Below the nation of Israel.

# SG304A.2.11.1 Labyrinths in India (1)
# Chakra-Vyuha (1)



↑ Close-up of the stone relief shown on next page.

One can trace the circuit of the classical 7-rings labyrinth, although the center is a spiral (now somewhat blurred - due to finger walking?). Note how the hero is crawling through.

Hoysaleswara temple, Halebid, Mysore, India. (Wikipedia).

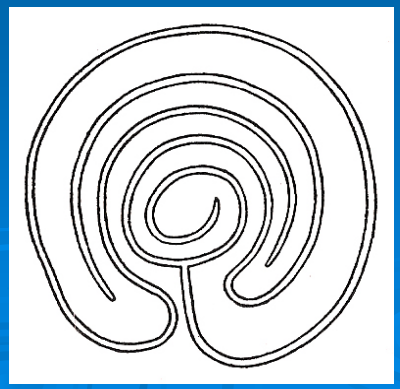
In Sanskrit, *chakra* means wheel and *vyuha* denotes battle formation. The term *chakra-vyuha* refers to troops organized in a labyrinth formation with apotropaic (Greek *apotrepein* = to ward off) powers to be impenetrable. This concept is appearing in the Indian *Mahabharata* epic which describes the great battles between the Pandavas and the Kauravas.

On the 10th day of the battle, the sage Drona decides to organize the Kauravas in the Chakra-Vyuha formation. After the Pandavas, under the command of the young prince Abhimanyu, were unsuccessful in breaking through the Kaurava's formation, incurring heavy losses, Abhimanyu's uncle pleads with him to use his knowledge of the Chakra-Vyuha to penetrate it. Abhimanyu then revealed that he had indeed learned from his father Arjuna how to break through and destroy the Kaurava battle formation but he had not heard how to find his way out of the labyrinth.

As a result, Abhimanyu was able to force his way into the center of his opponents' battle labyrinth, killing many of them, and to set the stage for the Pandavas' victory. However, at the center of the labyrinth formation, he was pierced by many arrows and killed.

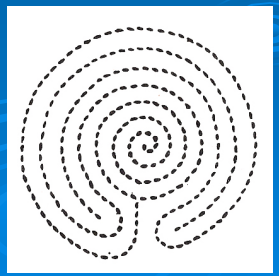
Scholars point to the fact that this description of a mission half-accomplished is a symbolic teaching about knowledge lacking totality or, in other words, an incomplete initiation into the secrets of birth and death. The lesson being a warning to refrain from tackling initiation tests before being fully prepared.

(Above description after H. Kern)



← Diagram of the Chakra-Vyuha sculpted in Halebid, India.

Stone labyrinth → Tamil Nadu, India. (H. Kern).

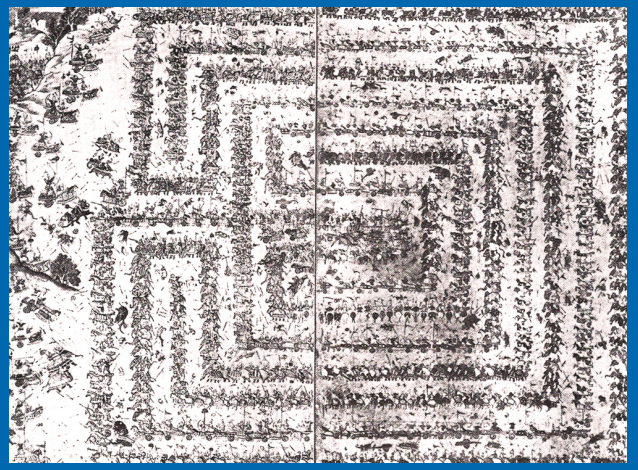


# SG304A.2.11.2 Labyrinths in India
# (2) Chakra-Vyuha (2)

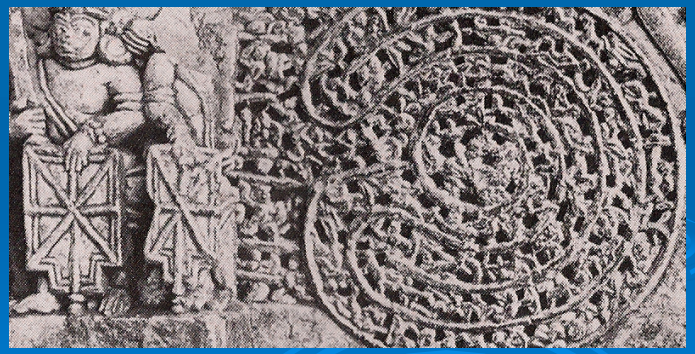
↑ Chakra Vyuha.

↑ Stone relief depicting a scene from the Mahabharata (12-13th c.). This is the legend of the Pandava prince Abhimanyu, on his chariot, battling the Kauravas. Behind him is the labyrinthine *chakra-vyuha*, the "impenetrable battle formation". Hoysaleswara temple, Halebid, Mysore, India.

(H. Kern. *Through the Labyrinth.)*



↑ Chakra-Vyuha battle formation. At the center, Abhimanyu is shown killed by arrows. Persian translation of the Mahabharata. Personal copy of emperor Akbar. (H. Kern).



↑ Chakra-vyuha. Relief from the Kedareswara temple. Halebid, Mysore, India. Here is the same labyrinth design but the center is more clearly seen as a spiral.
(Kern. *Through the Labyrinth.*)

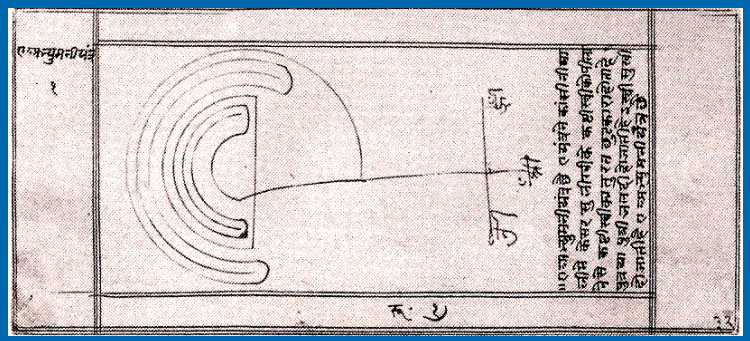
# SG304A.2.11.3 Labyrinths in India (3) Childbirth Rituals

As explained by H. Kern: *"Since the 17th c., Tantric drawings have perpetuated a custom of unknown age and still practiced today: a labyrinth is used to magically accelerate and ease the pains of labor."* The ritual is thus described: *"Rub ocher with water from the Ganges and use it to draw the Chakra-Vyuha on a bronze plate, rinse it and then give it to the laboring mother to drink. Birth will shortly ensue and the labor pains will be eased."* The underlying concept seems to be that the labyrinth is in resonance with the mother's uterus and that the child should be shown the way out through seven chambers in the mother's womb. This corresponds with the overall meaning of the labyrinth as an archetype of death and rebirth.

Birthing labyrinth diagrams are called *Abhyumani Yantras* (Sanskrit *yantra = instrument + Abhyumani,* a possible rendering of the hero Abhimanyu). In a version of the Mahabharata, Abhimanyu is supposed to have heard, still in his mother's womb, how his father Arjuna explained to his mother the way into the labyrinth. But, since she fell asleep inn the middle of the explanation, the unborn Abhimanyu remained ignorant of the way out.

↑ Chakra-Vyuh Yantra to ease childbirth.

Diagram from a modern book of Indian rituals depicting a labyrinth of a modified Cretan type with 11 rings. (H. Kern. Through the Labyrinth.)



← Birthing talisman based on the 7-rings Cretan-type labyrinth design.

19th c. drawing from Rajasthan.

(H. Kern).

← Abhumanyu Yantra.

Jain manuscript, Rajasthan, 17th c.

(H. Kern)

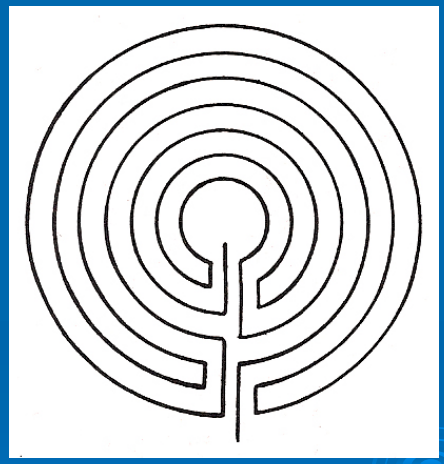
# SG304A.2.11.4 Labyrinths in India (4) Protection Rituals (1)

↑ Al-Biruni: the fortification of Ravana in Lanka.
Arab Manuscript. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale.

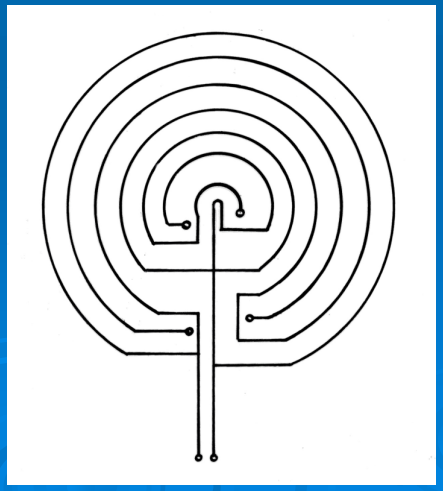
The labyrinth's magically defensive function can be traced to the Mahabharata's Chakra-Vyuha. By extension, labyrinths took on the archetypal job of protection - an *apotropaic* or warding-off function.

On the left (and below as a redrawing) is the design of the "fortification" of Ravana as reported by Al-Biruni. Many examples of protective labyrinths are found in India, specially as threshold auspicious drawings in South India (see next page).

Persian astrologer, geographer and historian Al-Biruni wrote in Arabic his comprehensive "Account of… India" (1045 CE). In chapter 30, he discusses Lanka (Ceylon) and the city of the demon-prince Ravana. Ravana is said to have hidden in his labyrinth-type castle, after abducting Sita, the consort of the God Rama.



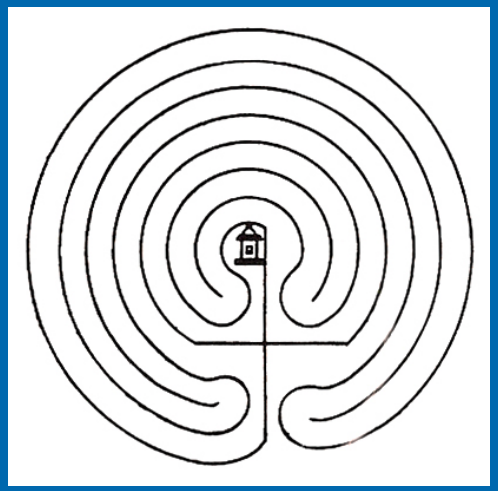
➔ Carving in a Kota village, Tamil Nadu, India.
Ariadne's Thread of a Cretan-type, 7-rings labyrinth. It is the location of a game called *kote* ("fortification") whose object is to reach the center. The labyrinth continues to play an integral role in the life of the Kota villagers. (H. Kern).



➔ Yavana-Koti
Redrawing of the original design: castle hiding the demon-prince Ravana, in Lanka, according to geographer & historian Al-Biruni, in his "Account of… India" (1045 CE).

(After R. Kaplan. The Nothing that is.)

# SG304A.2.11.5 Labyrinths in India (5) Protection Rituals (2)

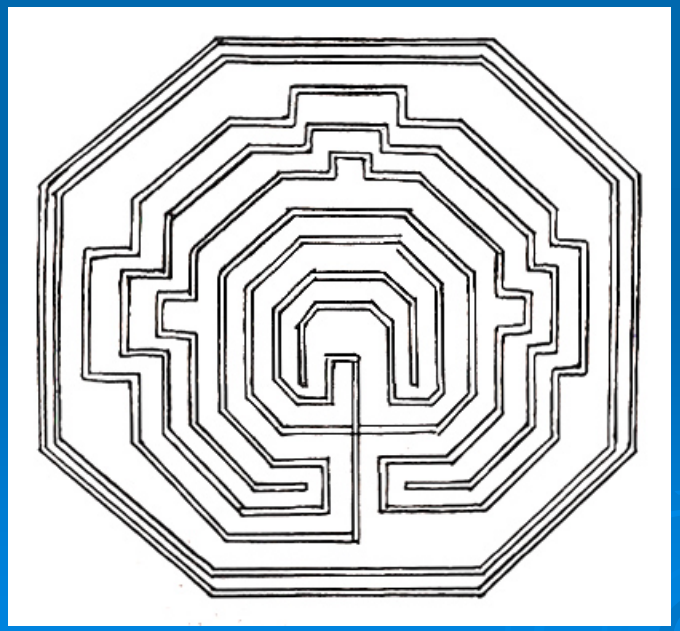


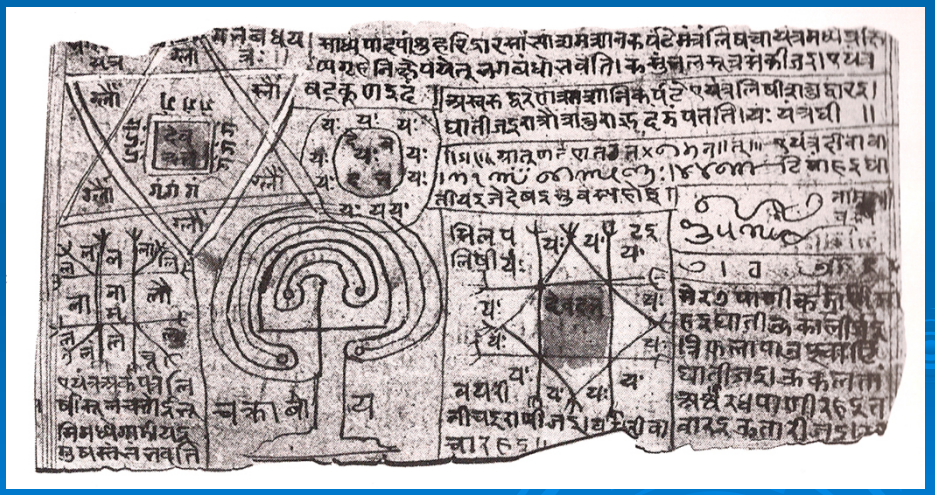
↑ Threshold drawing from an Indian pattern book. Ca. 1850. (H. Kern).

**H. Kern comments on the threshold designs found in India:**

***"Auspicious threshold drawings are a traditional ritual in South-Eastern India. Called Rangoli or Kolam, these designs are drawn by Hindu women, before sunrise, during Margali, the month thought by Tamil people to consist of inauspicious days: this is the period between mid-December and mid-January. Margali carries the energy of the sun "dying" after the winter solstice.***
***The largest South Indian festival is called 'Pongal' and marks the end of the inauspicious month, when the rebirth of the sun is celebrated.***
***An area just beyond the doorstep is cleaned with water for the drawing, and the lady of the house lets white powder trickle onto the damp surface in one steady line. This is repeated every morning before sunrise during Margali. The drawing is not protected and soon fades, which indicates that its efficiency does not lie in the visible realm; rather this ritual is intended to invoke magical protection…"***

**In the case of a labyrinth pattern, the protection is reinforced by the defensive power of the labyrinth.**
**[For more on Kolams ◆SG305]**





↑ Labyrinth appearing on a Tantric manuscript (ca. 1600 CE) figuring a variety of sacred geometry drawings & magical talismans. (H. Kern).

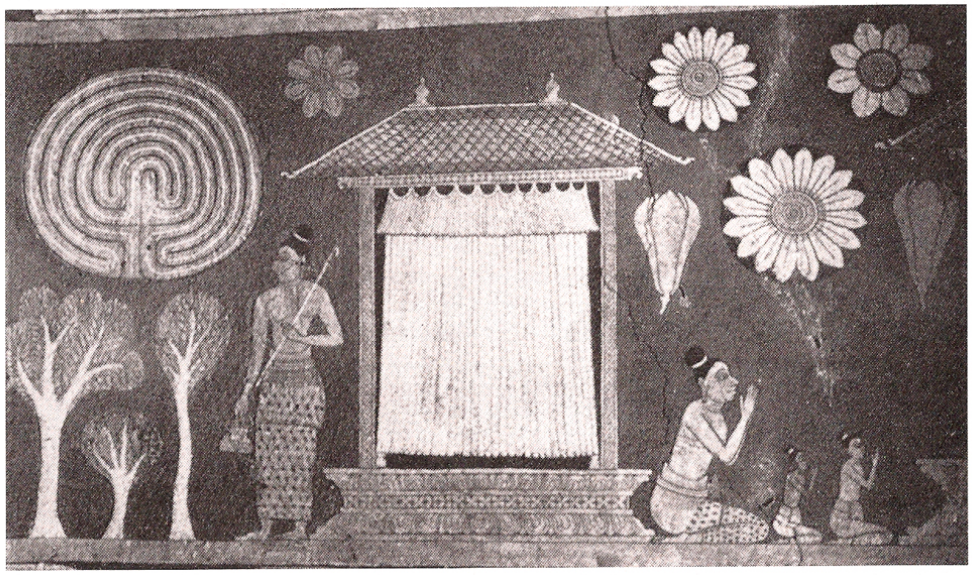
← Labyrinth threshold drawing. 20th century. (H. Kern).

# SG304A.2.12.1 Labyrinths in Asia (1) Sri Lanka

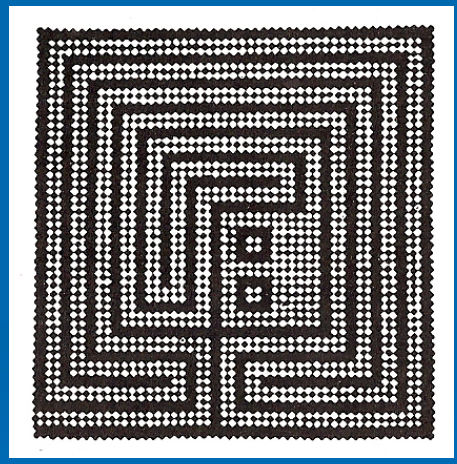
**The early form of Buddhism, Theravada Buddhism or Teaching of the Elders, is the predominant religion in Sri Lanka and most of Southeast Asia. The canonical language is Pali which probably was also the language used by the historic Buddha.**

**An interesting use of the labyrinth design is found in the last of the Jataka Tales, a voluminous body of Buddhist texts concerning the previous lives of the Buddha. The last tale recounts the selfless generosity of Prince Vessantara, the penultimate incarnation of Gautama Buddha.**

**The labyrinth, in the Vessantara Jataka tale, represents the *"crooked mountain"* to which Vessantara was banished after he gave away a magical white elephant that ensured timely rainfall. His wife Maddi and two children followed him into the isolation of an ascetic life at the foot of the Himalayas. For seven months (a reminder of the 7 rings of the labyrinth) they led a life of austerity, living in two huts. The symbolic use of the labyrinth seems to represent here a time of initiation into self-reliance and journeying to the center of the Spirit Self.**



**↑ Fresco from a Ceylonese temple. 1755.**
**The scene represents Maddi gathering berries on the "Crooked Mountain" labyrinth, on the left, and, on the right, Maddi and her two children speaking to Vessantara. (H. Kern).**



**↑ Woven grass mat representing the inaccessible "Crooked Mountain".**
**The two small squares are the two huts of Prince Vessantara and his wife & children.**
**Sri Lanka. 19th c.**

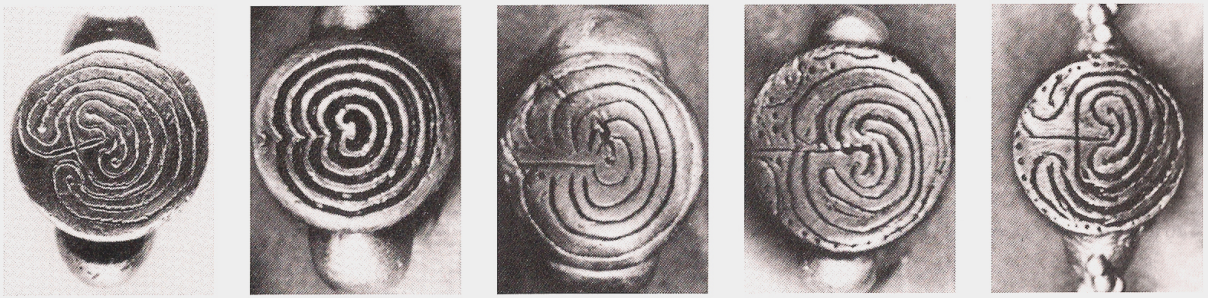
# SG304A.2.12.2 Labyrinths in Asia
# (2) Indonesia

Indian labyrinths were transmitted to the Indian sphere of influence: Afghanistan in the West and the Indonesian islands of Sumatra & Java in the South-East.

Indonesia was particularly influenced by India from the 8th century to the Islamic conquest in the 16th century. Adityavarman, an Indian King and an eager missionary of Mahayana Buddhism, ruled over Java in the 14th century.

↑ Column bearing magical designs.
Royal Residence. Permatang Purba ("ancient sand-hill"), Sumatra, Indonesia. (H. Kern. Through the Labyrinth.)

← Batak book of magic on tree bark.
Note the classic labyrinth on the top right corner.
Sumatra, 19th c.

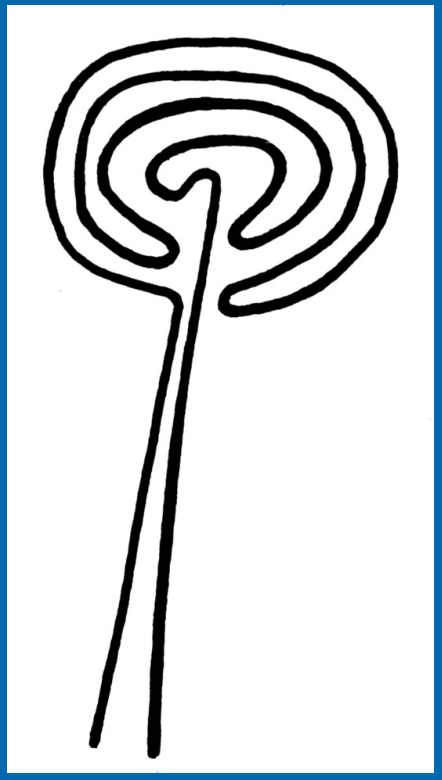


← Indo-Javanese gold rings.
Cretan-type labyrinths with various degrees of exactitude.
The rings on the far left and far right reveal the construction from a cross pattern. Jakarta, National Museum. (H. Kern)

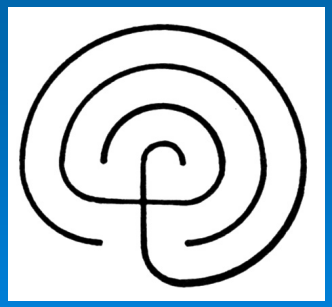
# SG304A.2.13 The Labyrinth of Nazca

One of the many intricate "geoglyph" patterns created on the plains of Nazca (Southern Peru) is in the form of a labyrinth. This is one of the smaller figures and has been variously described as a "flower" or a "key", but it is clearly a simple unicursal labyrinth.

Technical notes: the Nazca plain glyphs, attributed to the Nazca culture, are dated between 400 and 650 BCE. The area is virtually unique for its ability to preserve the markings upon it, due to the combination of the climate (one of the driest on Earth, with only twenty minutes of rainfall per year) and the flat, stony ground which minimizes the effect of the wind at ground level. With no dust or sand to cover the plain, and little rain or wind to erode it, lines drawn here tend to stay drawn. These factors, combined with the existence of a lighter-colored subsoil beneath the desert crust, provide a vast writing slate. The pebbles which cover the surface of the desert contain ferrous oxide. The exposure of centuries has given them a dark patina. When the gravel is removed, they contrast with the color underneath.
The lines were drawn as furrows of a lighter color, even though in some cases they became prints. In other cases, the stones defining the lines and drawings form small lateral humps of different sizes. Some glyphs, especially the early ones, were made by removing the stones and gravel from their contours and in this way the figures stood out in high relief.



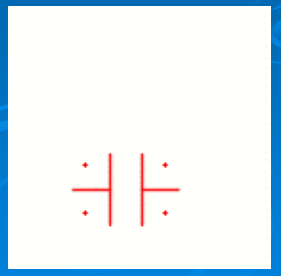
Labyrinth of Nazca, Peru.
(the left line is the path)



Design for the classical
3-ring labyrinth.
(entrance on left, between the lines)

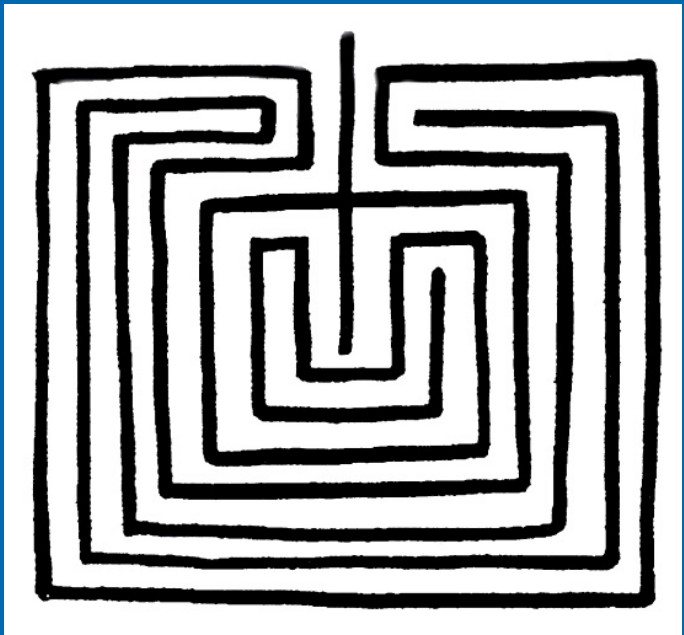
(Image credit)

The "Monkey Tail" could also be walked as a unicursal "path to the center".



Animation:
//labyrinthsociety.org

# SG304A.2.14.1 American Indian Labyrinths (1) Hopi



↑ The Hopi square labyrinth is called *"Tapu'at"* or "Mother and Child". It represents spiritual rebirth within the arms of the Cosmic Mother.

*"The straight line emerging from the entrance is not connected with the labyrinth. Its two ends symbolize the two stages of life: the unborn child within the womb of Mother Earth and the child after it is born, the line symbolizing the umbilical cord and the path of Emergence.*

*… The lower end of the line is embraced by the U-shaped arm. The inside lines represent the fetal membranes which enfold the child within the womb, and the outside lines the mother's arms which hold the child later."*

In his "Book of the Hopi" (1963) Frank Waters describes a Hopi labyrinth symbol known to the Hopis as "Mother Earth".

The Hopi labyrinth comes in two forms: square and circular. There are one circular and 5 square designs carved on a rock south of Oraibi, and one circular on a rock South of Shipaulavi.

The Hopi labyrinth is connected to the sacred *kiva* (underground ceremonial chamber) that is itself "Mother Earth".

The center of both labyrinths is the *sipapuni* (door of emergence). *"The sipapuni, the small door in the floor of the kiva, represents the womb, the Place of Emergence from the preceding world. And the ladder leading out through the roof for another Emergence to the succeeding world is the umbilical cord."*

↑ Tapu'at Labyrinth. Oraibi, Hopiland. (H. Kern)

↑ The circular Hopi labyrinth is the classical 7-rings design. It is connected to the cross of the 4 directions and symbolizes the Sun Father.

*"The center line at the entrance is directly connected with the labyrinth, and the center of the cross it forms symbolizes Father Sun, the Giver of Life… All the lines and passages form the universal plan of the Creator which man must follow on his Road of Life.*

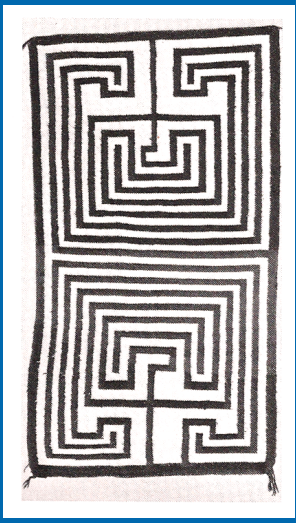
*The four points represent the cardinal or directionql points embraced within this universal plan of life. Rebirth to the one who follows the plan is guaranteed…*

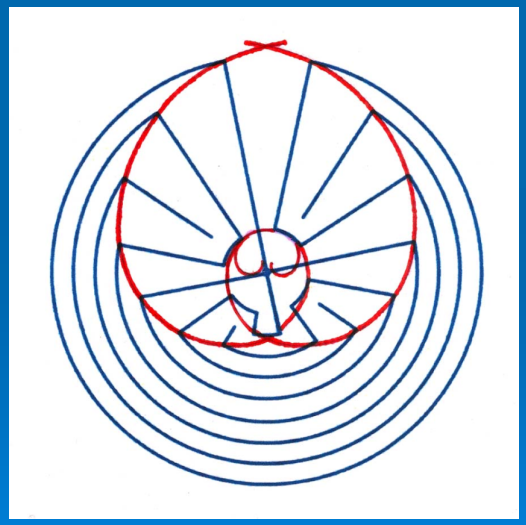
*The circular design also symbolizes the concentric boundaries of the land traditionally claimed by the Hopis."*

# SG304A.2.14.2 American Indian Labyrinths (2)

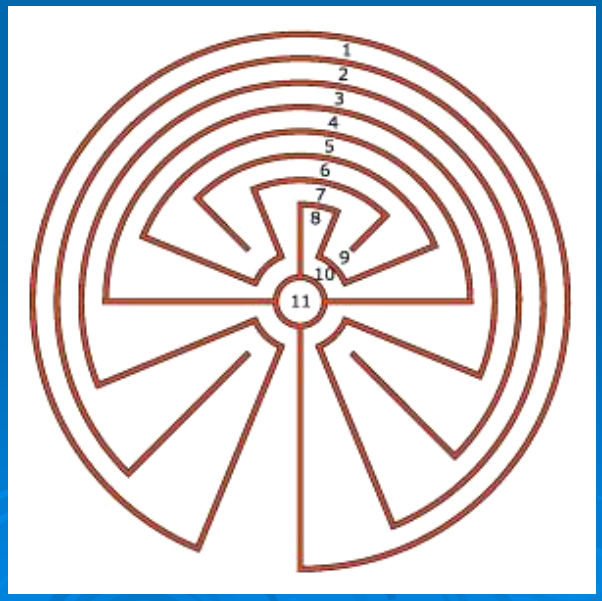
← Variation of the classical labyrinth on a Pima basket from Arizona. This design has a 5-fold seed pattern and 9 circuits. (www.labyrinthos.net).

Navajo →
saddle blanket
with square
classical labyrinth.





↑ The Pima labyrinth has an inherent recursive Phi spiral showing the "turning inside out". (www.goldenmean.info/labyrinth/)




← This is the classical labyrinth in a special form: the "Man in the Web."

This American Indian design is round, but the goal is not in the middle. One can recognize the four points of inflexion of the classical labyrinth. They also mark four corners of a square, and the "Four Corners" of American Indian tradition.

The subdivision in 8 segments is un-classical, but hints at the spokes of a wheel, such as the 8 spokes of the Buddhist Wheel of the Law.

There is a movement towards the centre and away from the centre. The order of paths is again 3-2-1-4-7-6-5-8, well-known from the classical type. The path changes always occur on the 9th and 10th ring. The 11th is as it were the stationary pole or the hub. (Credit).

# SG304A.2.15 Field Labyrinths in Europe

Field labyrinths in Europe are of two main types:

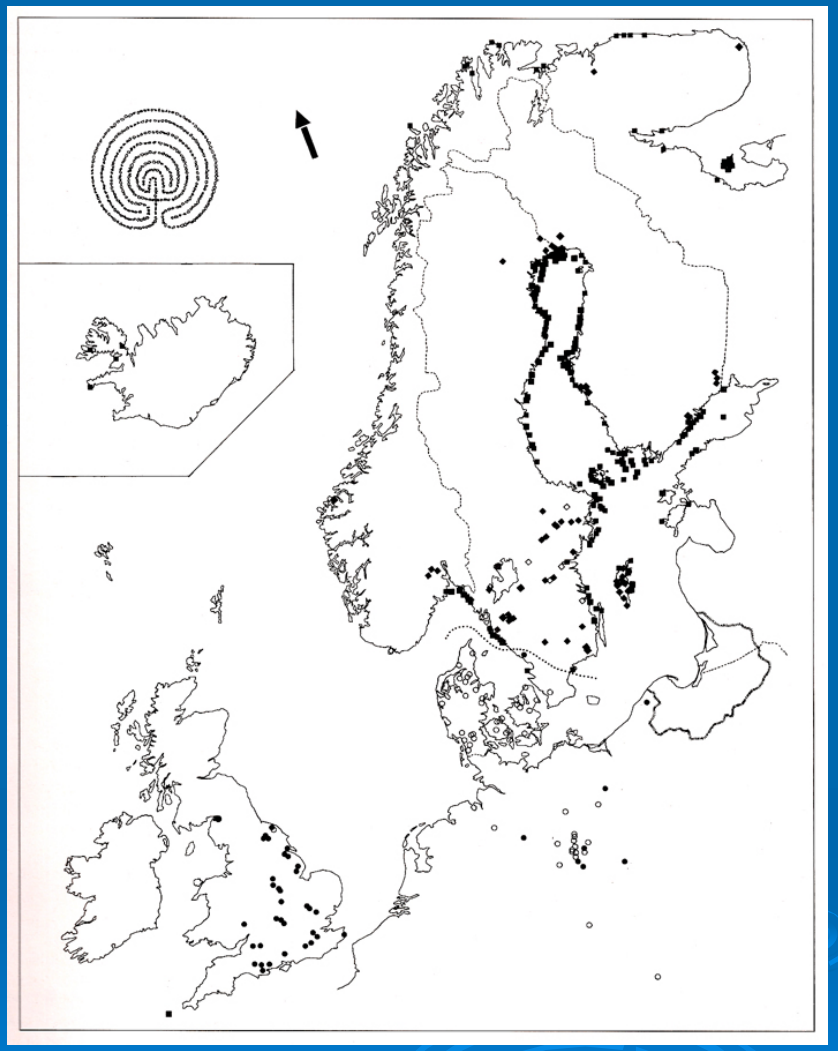
• **Stone labyrinths** (also called *"Troy Towns"*), traditionally encountered in Scandinavian countries (Russia also hosts some stone labyrinths - see infra).

← Example of stone labyrinth. Tibble, Sweden.

• **Turf labyrinths**, a specialty of England (with a few examples in Germany).

← Example of turf labyrinth. Saffron Walden, England.

England does not have church labyrinths, Troy Towns or stone labyrinths but only turf labyrinths.

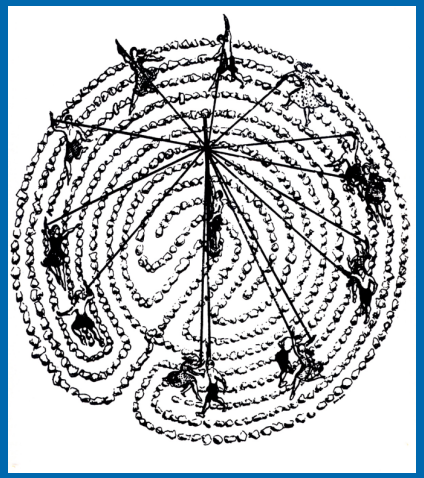


↑ Location of field labyrinths in Europe.
■ Coastal stone labyrinths
◆ Inland stone labyrinths
O Turf Labyrinths

# SG304A.2.16.1 Stone Labyrinths - Scandinavia (1)

In Scandinavian countries, there are hundreds of stone labyrinths, also called “Troy towns”. According to H. Kern, there are approximately 300 Troy Towns in Sweden, some 20 in Norway, and about 140 in Finland. They have been dated between 500 and 1000 years old. All these stone formations take the form of the Cretan labyrinth, and, from popular traditions, we know that they were associated with ceremonial rituals. Troy Towns were sometimes referred to as "Jungfrudans" or "Maiden's Dance" whereby a young girl would stand at the center and await her suitor.

← 11-rings "Trojeborg" labyrinth, from Visby, Sweden. Note that this is a right-handed labyrinth. (Wikipedia).



Labyrinth at Rosaring. Credit.

← Reconstruction of an hypothetical “Dance of the Crane” within a field labyrinth. (H. Kern.)

↑ Stone Labyrinth at Bla Jungfrun, Sweden. Wikipedia.

*Visby, Gotland, Sweden*

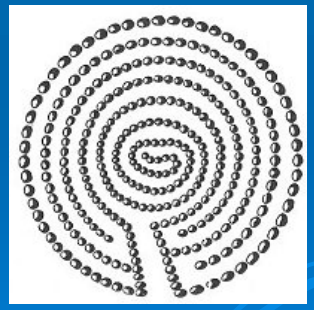
*Ulmekäar, Bohuslän, Sweden*

*Nyhamn, Gotland, Sweden*

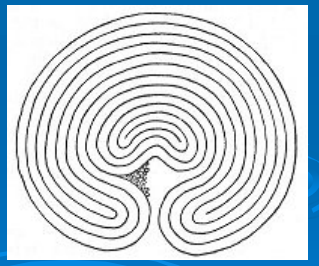
*Nyhamn Storlandet, Åland, Finland*

*Bragegården, Vaasa, Finland*

*Gregersö, Åland, Finland*



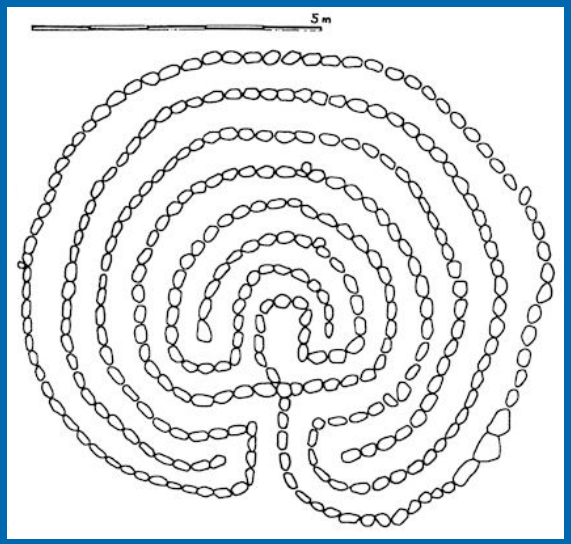
↑ Stone labyrinth on Wier Island, Finland. (von Baer).



↑ Stone labyrinth on the Coast of Finland. (Aspelin)

← Some of the many pictures of stone labyrinths in the photo gallery of Jeff Saward's outstanding website www.labyrinthos.net

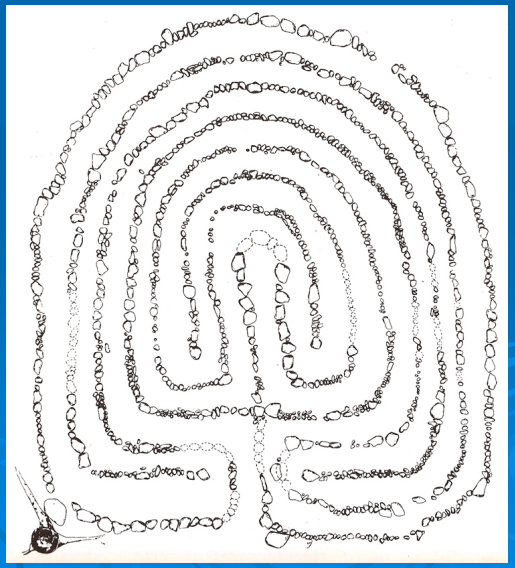
# SG304A.2.16.2 Stone Labyrinths - Scandinavia (2)




← Stone labyrinth at Holmengra, Norway.
Bjornar Olsen.
(*Caerdroia* 27 - 1996 - pp.24-27)

Labyrinth of Tibble, → Sweden.
(S. Lonegren. *Les Labyrinthes*)

← Labyrinth of the Jungfruringen, Sweden.
According to local folklore, a young girl-to-be-married was placed in the center of the labyrinth and two suitors were racing from the two inner entrances.
The winner would marry the girl.
(S. Lonegren. *Les Labyrinthes*.)



← Labyrinth of Lindbacke, Sweden.
This stone labyrinth is now separated from the Baltic Sea by the new city of Nyköping.

Note the shape: flat at the entrance and round on top.
(S. Lonegren. *Les Labyrinthes*.)

# SG304A.2.16.3 Stone Labyrinths - Russia

**In Russia, there is evidence of about 60 stone labyrinths, both on the Baltic coast and on the White Sea's coasts and islands.**

**The stone labyrinths of Bolshoi Zayatsky Island are the most famous: they are a group of 13 or 14 labyrinths. In all there are 35 labyrinths (known as *vavilons* or "Babylons" in the local dialect) in the Solovetsky Islands. All have been made of local boulders. Measuring between 6 and 25.4 meters in diameter, the labyrinths are mostly made of stones (30−40 cm in diameter) set in a row. The rows are twisted in the form of a spiral; often there are two spirals set one into another, which has been likened to "two serpents with their heads in the middle looking at each other". Intermittently along the spiral there are thicker or wider heaps of stones; the ends of the spirals are also wider. The entrances are generally on the southern sides of the labyrinths. The labyrinths have five types of settings, but each has only one entrance which also serves as an exit.**

**← Stone labyrinth.**
**Credit**

**↓ Stone labyrinth on Bolshoi island. Wikipedia.**

**↑ Big Zayatskii island.**
**Credit.**

lad28070993

Соловецкий Архипелаг, Заяцкие острова

lad28070987

Соловецкий Архипелаг, Заяцкие острова

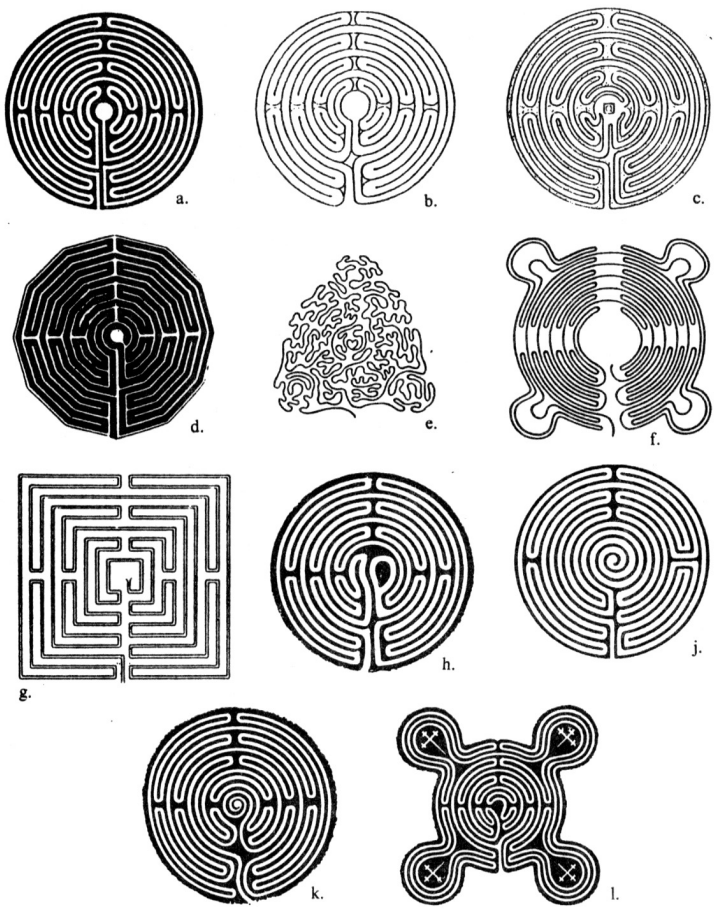
**↑ Credit**

# SG304A.2.17.1 Turf Labyrinths - England (1)

**Turf labyrinths have "walls" cut into the turf to form shallow ditches, usually covered with pebbles. The walker therefore steps upon the raised strip of turf as the "path" or "thread of Ariadne". Turf labyrinths seem to be a British specialty (although some are found in Germany). Shakespeare, in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, mentions the *"quaint mazes in the wanton green".***

**It is interesting to note that England did not have church labyrinths, Troy Towns or stone labyrinths. Conversely, in France and Italy, where church labyrinths were many, there is no evidence of either Troy Towns or turf labyrinths. And, in Scandinavia, replete with stone labyrinths, church or turf labyrinths are inexistent.**

**H. Kern notes: *"Although the layout of turf labyrinths was presumably imported from Northern France, the construction technique was largely an English phenomenon. By constructing labyrinths outside, rather than inside their churches, English clerics carried on an ancient tradition."* The serene beauty of English turf labyrinths is a gift to humanity.**




EXISTANTS (GB) : a. Alkborough - b. Breamore - c. Hilton - d. Marfleet - e. Pimperne - f. Saffron-Walden - g. Winchester - h. Wing – DÉTRUITS (GB) : j. Boughton - k. Ripon - l. Sneinton.

**(P. de Saint-Hilaire.**
***L'Univers Secret du Labyrinthe*.)**

**↑ "The City of Troy" near Dalby, North Yorkshire, is said to be Europe's smallest turf labyrinth. (Wikipedia).**

# SG304A.2.17. 2 Turf Labyrinths - England (2)

← ↑ Alkborough, Lincolnshire. (H. Kern. *Through the Labyrinth*.) Extant.

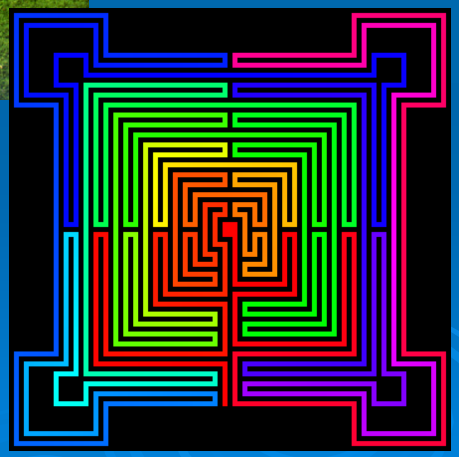
↔ Hilton, Cambridgeshire. Extant. (H. Kern)

↑ Ripon Common, Yorkshire. Now plowed under. (H. Kern)

# SG304A.2.17.3 Turf Labyrinths - England (3)

← ↑ Saffron Walden, Essex.
(H. Kern. *Through the Labyrinth*.)
Extant.

↑ Turf labyrinth at Wing, near Uppingham, Rutland. Extant.



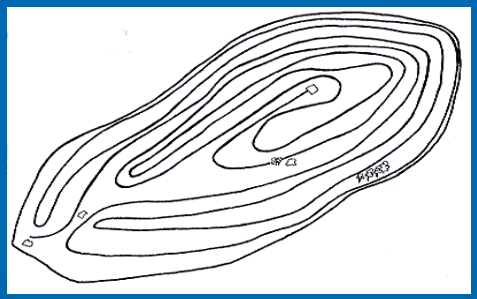
↑ Rainbow version of Saffron Walden
by Andrew Hardwick.

# SG304A.2.17.4 Turf Labyrinths - England (4) Glastonbury

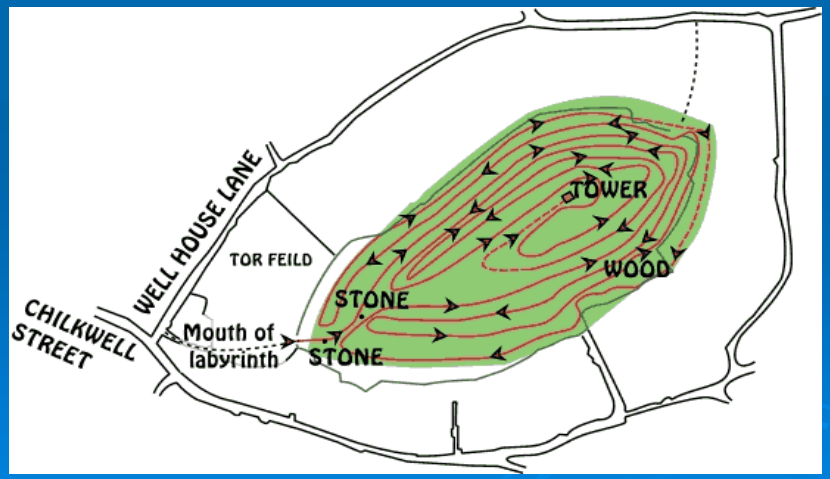
↑ The seven deep, roughly symmetrical terraces are one of the Tor's enduring mysteries.

**Was the Glastonbury Tor artificially shaped in a 3D labyrinth design?**

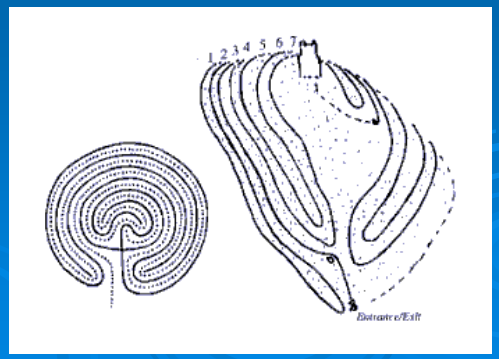
**In the nineteen-sixties, Geoffrey Russel first postulated that there was a three-dimensional classical 7-circuits labyrinth superimposed on the Glastonbury Tor. Since then, others (like Geoffrey Ashe and Kathy Jones) have written books about this labyrinth. To this day, archaeologists claim that it isn't there. But those who have walked it feel differently.**



↑ The Tor labyrinth according to Sig Lonegren.




http://www.geomancy.org




← The 3D Tor labyrinth, as seen by Kathy Jones.

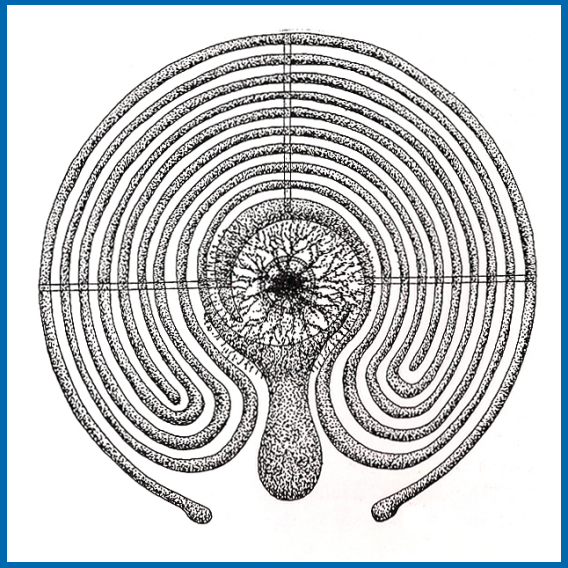
(Credit)

# SG304A.2.18 Turf Labyrinths - Germany

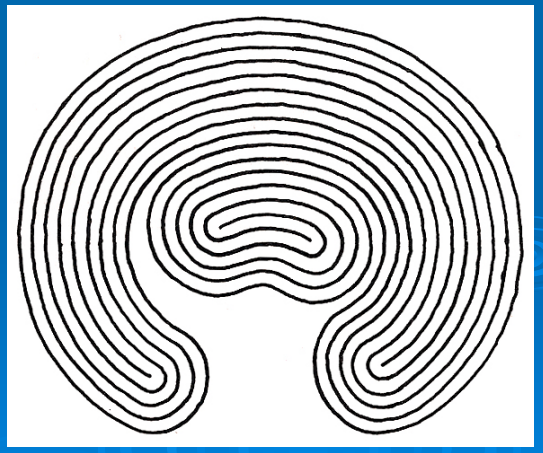
**Turf labyrinths have been recently "re-discovered" in Germany. Some are described in an addendum to H. Kern's book.**

**Hanover's "Rad" (the Wheel) ➔**
**This large (32 m. in diameter) turf labyrinth has a fully gown linden at its center. It is said that young men & women who were not yet engaged to be married used to amuse themselves by running the labyrinth: one would start at the center and the other began from the entrance. Note the 10th line on the outside, as if protecting the labyrinth. Extant.**

**← "Trujaborg" at Dransfeld, near Göttingen. Destroyed in 1957.**



Labyrinth of Steigra, Germany.



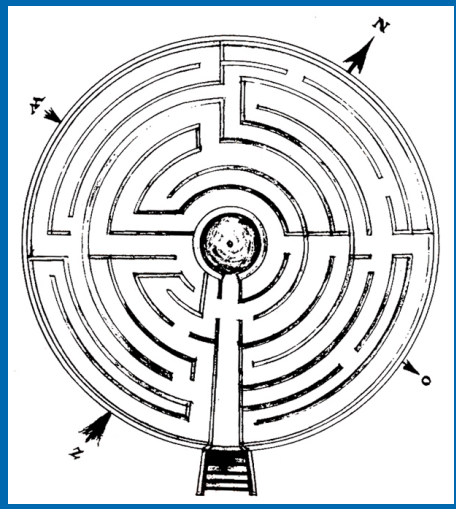
**↑ The "Zauberkreis" at Eberswalde-Finow, Brandebourg. It has two entrances, enabling two boys to run simultaneously in two directions.**

# SG304A.2.19 Love Labyrinths

Between 1550 and 1650, a specific type of hedge labyrinth was en vogue in Europe: the "Love Labyrinth". As explained by H. Kern: *"The basic design - made by planting hedges in concentric circles - was borrowed from church labyrinths and the transecting walls were adaptations of the trans-axes of the Chartres-type labyrinths…"*

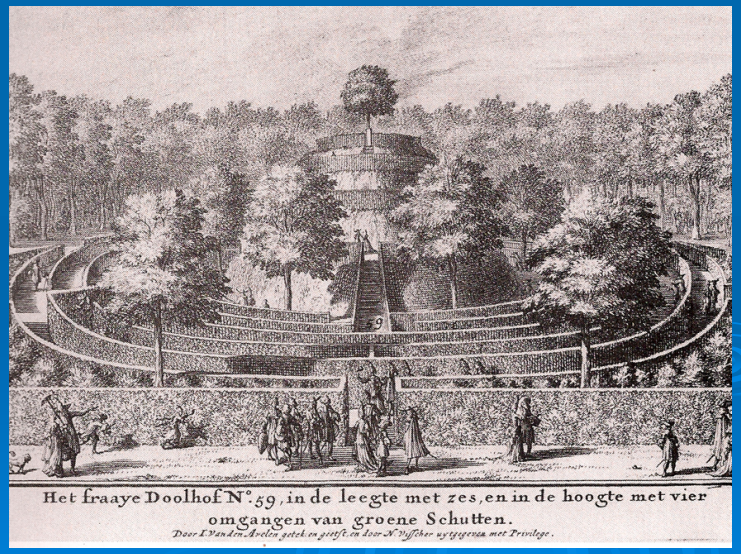
Love labyrinths were leading to a maypole at the center, the archetype of the Tree of life. The crown of the tree was left untouched and wreaths would be hanging from it. Love labyrinths were associated with the community's springtime celebration customs: they had fertility-oriented and erotic aspects. Villagers would gather and dance around the Maypole, and, for fairs and festivities, a shelter next to the tree was decorated to serve as the tent of the May King.

Labyrinth of Love were actual labyrinths, and not mazes like most of the designs conceived during the Renaissance and Baroque period. They come closest to church labyrinths in form and meaning. Yet they offered lovers the thrills of hiding and enjoying intimate "merriment", thus combining human and spiritual love.



➔ Pen-and-ink drawing of the hedge labyrinth at Leyden castle. At the center, under a linden tree, was a bower.

↑ Copperplate engraving on the theme of "Wedding". A young woman, with a bouquet in her hand, is enticed by Cupid to enter the Labyrinth of Love. Note the medallion (bottom right) showing the hand of God holding the thread of Ariadne. Netherlands. Ca. 1700.



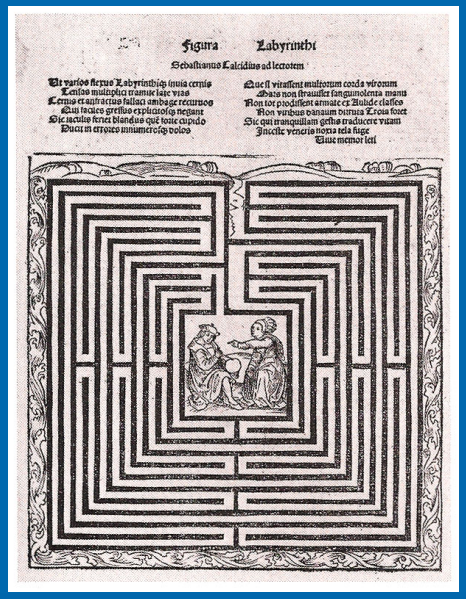

➔ Labyrinth of Love in the park of the Sorgvliet Castle, near The Hague, Netherlands.

Mid 17th c.

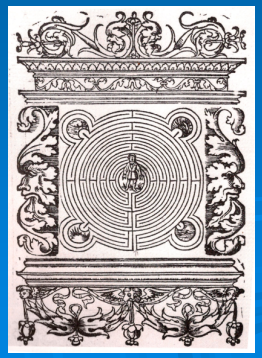
(All images from H. Kern. *Through the Labyrinth*.)

# SG304A.2.20.1 Renaissance Art (1) Images

**The early Renaissance, as a revival of humanistic scholarship, was deeply immersed in the classical tradition. Many woodcuts, engravings, copperplates and etchings represent unicursal labyrinths as clear and firm symbols of Tradition. The labyrinth is still fully understood as a "way to the center".**



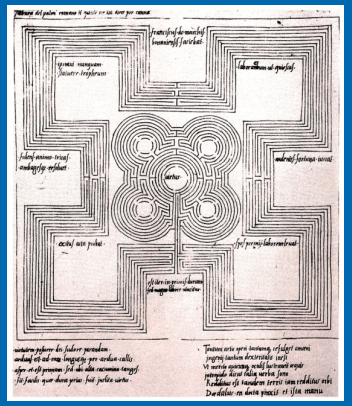
**←↑↑ 3 Woodcuts by Nuremberg Master. Ca. 1495.**



**← Guillaume de la Perrière. 1539.**

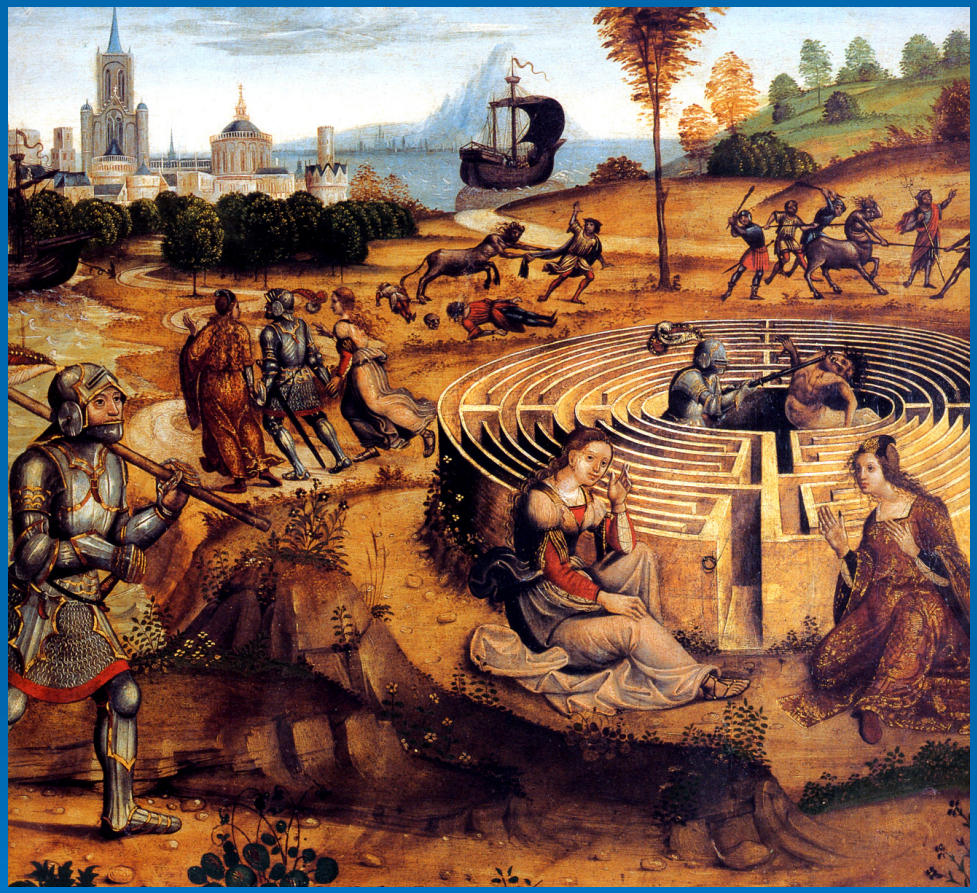
**Copperplate engraving ➔ by Francesco di Marchi. 1545. The labyrinth is a ground plan for fortifications. The central design is modeled on Reims and is incorporated into a surrounding labyrinth.**

**[All images from: H. Kern]**



**Engraving ➔ Athanasius Kircher's *Turris Babel*, 1679.**

# SG304A.2.20.2 Labyrinths in Renaissance Art (2) Paintings



↑ "Theseus and the minotaur".
Chest ("cassone") painting. Early 16th c.
Maitre des Cassoni Campana. (See supra for explanations).
(H. Kern. Through the Labyrinth.)

"Portait of a man". Bartolomeo Veneto.
Ca. 1510. (Wikipedia).

# SG304A. 2.21 The Christian Soul Journey

**In the 16th-18th centuries, the labyrinth as symbol was taken over by Christian interpreters eager to point to the Word of God as salvation from the suffering of the world. The character of the "Christian pilgrim" became very popular as a devotional allegory: he is depicted in numerous Christian works as wandering in confusion through the "world-labyrinth" only to find salvation by holding on to the "Thread of Ariadne" recast as the Word of God. An angel or the Virgin Mary are hauling the hopeful pilgrim out of the worldly troubles and up into the higher heavens. At this point, the original (classical and medieval) understanding of the labyrinth as a unicursal "way to the center" has been lost and has degenerated: the drawings only show some variety of mazes with confusing turns and dead-ends.**

**However, it is interesting to note an obvious parallel with the Tibetan iconography of the *"Wheel of Life"*. The mandala of the Wheel of Life or *Bhavachakra* [◆SG304B] is a symbolic representation of *samsara* (or cyclic existence) found on the outside walls of Tibetan Buddhist temples and monasteries in the Indo-Tibet region. The Bhavacakra is popularly referred to as the *Wheel of Life* (also translated as *wheel of cyclic existence* or *wheel of becoming*). Regions & rings on the mandala represent situations of spiritual ignorance (the equivalent of the world's confusing maze). The moon above the wheel represents spiritual liberation from the bondage of *samsara* and the Buddha pointing to the moon indicates that liberation is possible. The parallel between the Tibetan and the Christian allegory is striking.**

↑ "The Christian Wanderer" by Antonius A. of Krzesimowsky. 1756.

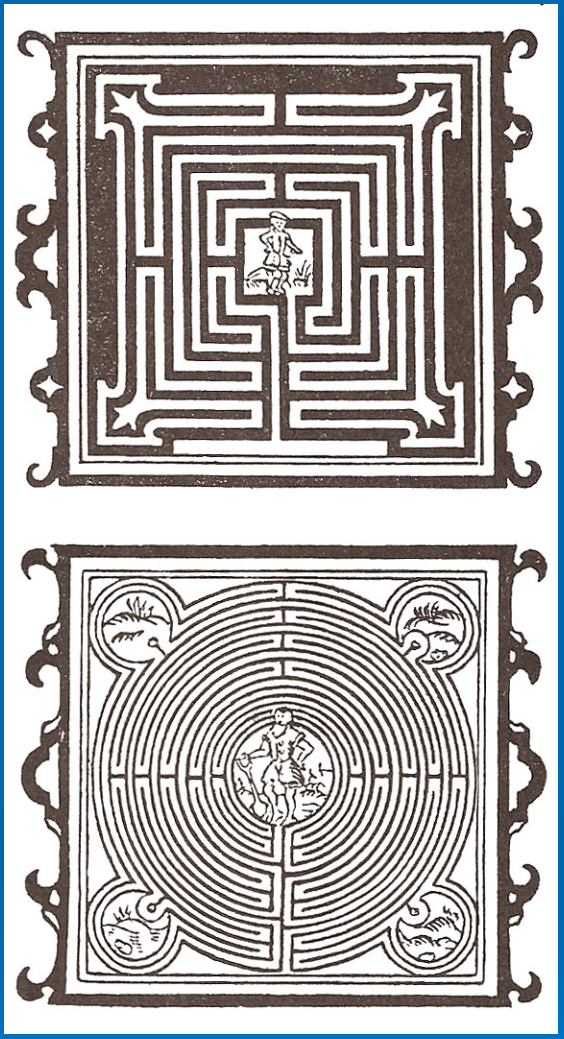
Wheel of Life

↑ "The Christian Soul in the Labyrinth of the world". 1632. Engraving by B. van Bolswart.

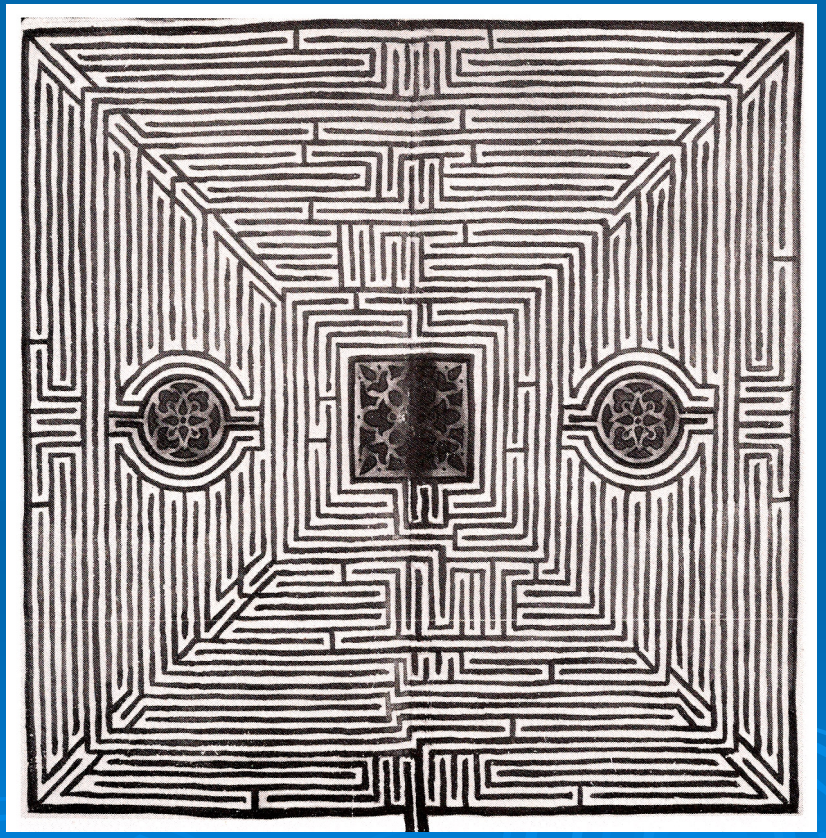
Credit

# SG304A.2.22.1 Garden Labyrinths Designs (1)

**Labyrinths, in the Renaissance and Baroque eras, have played an important role in landscape architecture, specially when formal, geometrical gardens were the fashion. These labyrinths, at first an outgrowth of the medieval "herb" gardens, became a genre onto themselves: labyrinths were constructed from hedges lining both sides of the paths and grown taller than the users.**
**In the next 3 pages, are visual examples of garden labyrinths from landscape books and from actual realizations. All images are from H. Kern's *Through the Labyrinth*.**

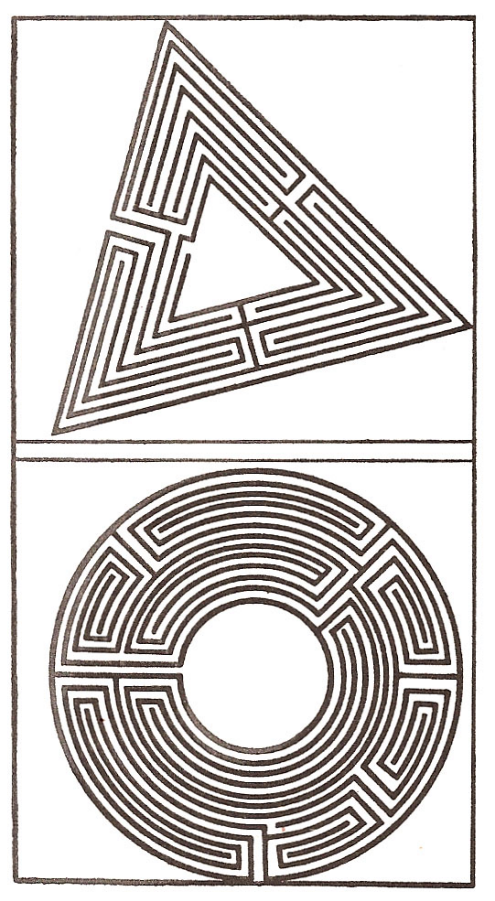


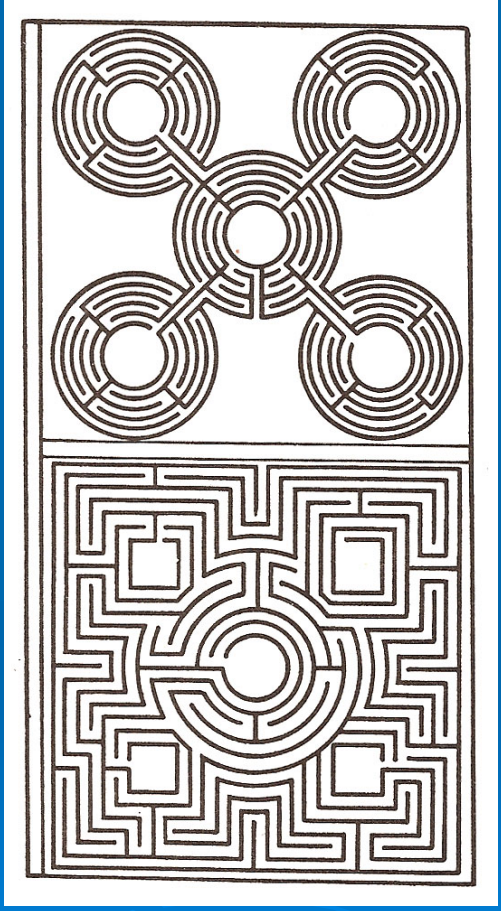
**↑ Two woodcuts from Thomas Hill's *The Profitable Art of Gardening*. 1579.**
**These are herb gardens which, in the words of T. Hill, *"may eyther be set with Isope and Time, or with winter Savery and Tyme. And there be some which set their labyrinths with Lavender, Cotton Spike, Majerome and such like."***



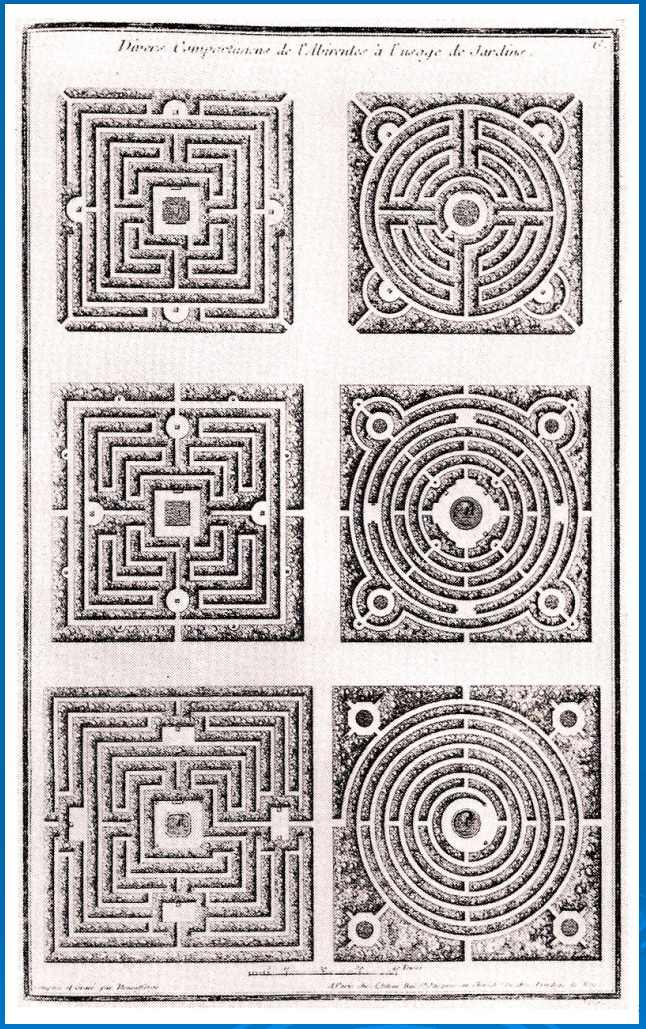
**↑ Design for a garden labyrinth by Venetian artist Lelio Pittoni. 1611.**

# SG304A.2.22.2 Garden Labyrinths Designs (2)





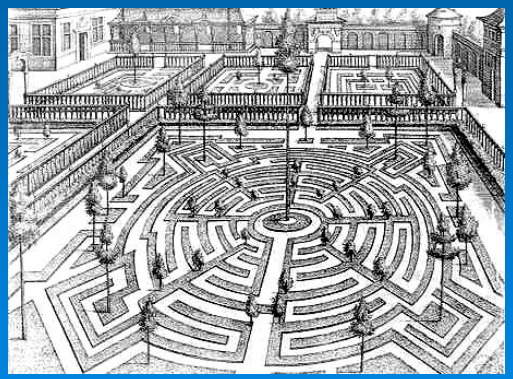
↑ Designs for garden labyrinths by Georg Andreas Boeckler's *Architectura Curiosa Nova* (1644). To accompany his drawings of castles and great houses in Germany and elsewhere, Boeckler published a great number of ingenious labyrinth-type designs.



↑ From Jean Francois de Neufforge's *Recueil Elémentaire d'Architecture* (1757). Engraving with 6 ground plans for garden labyrinths.

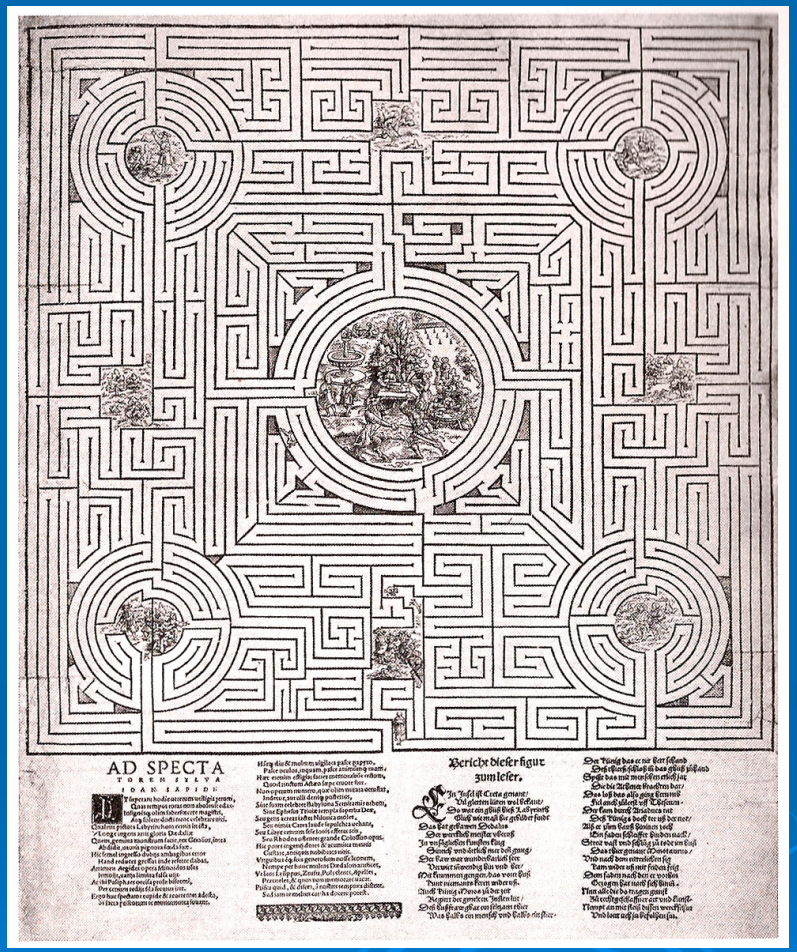
# SG304A.2.22.3 Garden Labyrinths Designs (3)

↑↓ Floral labyrinths by De Vries. 1583.



A curious book of garden designs, *"Hortorum Vididariorumque Formae"*, was published in 1583 (Antwerp) by Jan Vredeman de Vries, an architect and city planner.
In it are sketched many elaborate plan for the lay-out of gardens, including nine in the form of labyrinths, with quasi-classic tiles: "Ionica", "Corinthia"…

← Credit: doolhoven.nl




↑ Woodcut by Anonymous German Master, ca. 1550.
Probably intended as the plan for a hedge labyrinth, as the figurative scenes in the five medallions all take place outdoors.

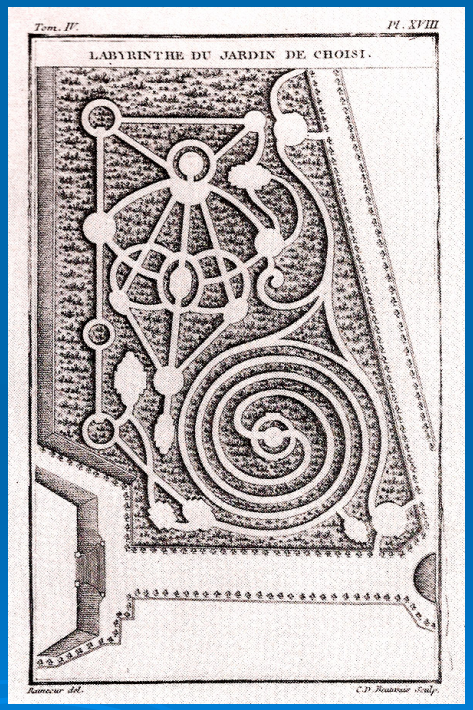
# SG304A.2.23 The Craze of Garden Mazes

Visual depictions of the Labyrinth from Roman times until the early Renaissance are almost invariably unicursal. However, as "garden labyrinths" became the fashion between the 16th and 18th centuries, branching mazes superseded actual labyrinths. *"The labyrinth's ideological & metaphysical meanings were diluted to the point of being unrecognizable… The interest did not go beyond the desire to be amused by scholarly allusions and decorative shapes - that is, to be confronted with the (supposed) danger of getting lost, and to take advantage of the labyrinth's many nooks and crannies to for all manner of dalliances."* (H. Kern).

We are now seeing the elaborate, worldly designs of "mazes" superseding the classical "one way" labyrinth designs. The Sacred Geometry & Geomancy knowledge has been lost.

↑ Hatfield House, Hertfordshire. Built in 1611.
The "labyrinth" concept has now undergone an 180° turn.

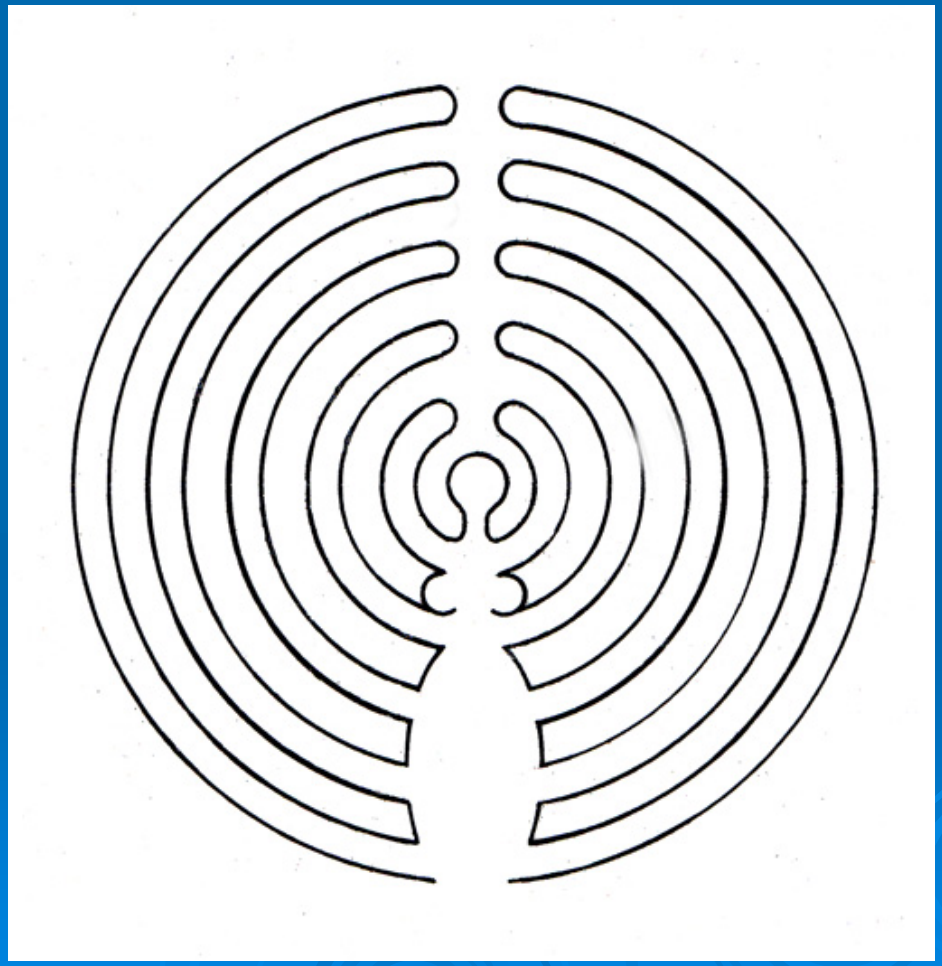
The thrills of getting lost in a fashionable maze have replaced the inner joy of journeying into Self.



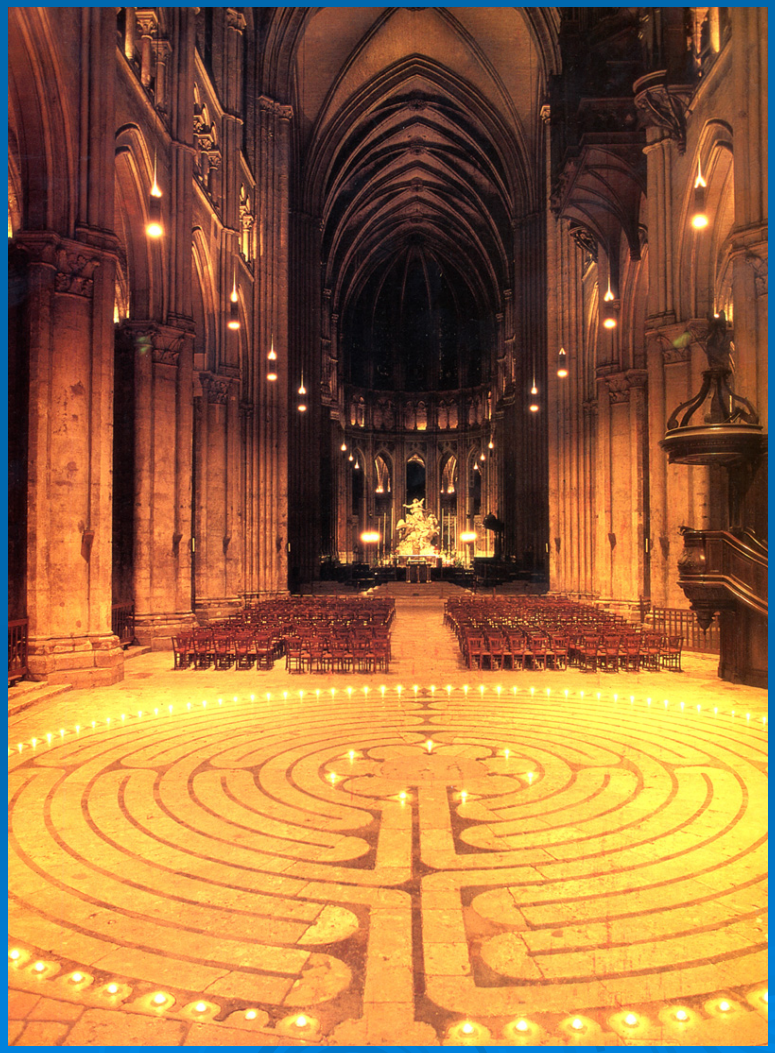

↑ Ground plan of the maze
at Choisy-le-Roi, France. 1740.

↑ Garden design by Hans Puec. 1592.

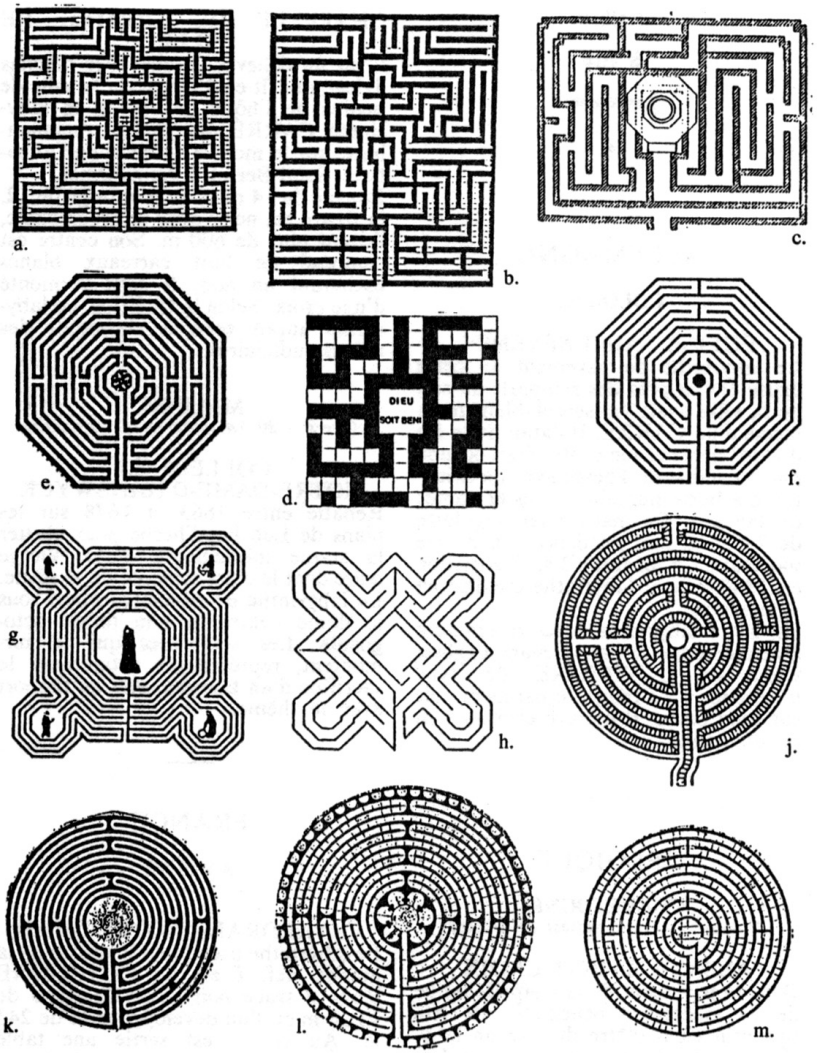
# SG304A. Interlude 2. Imitation Labyrinth as Goddess



# SG304A. Chapter 3. Medieval Church Labyrinths



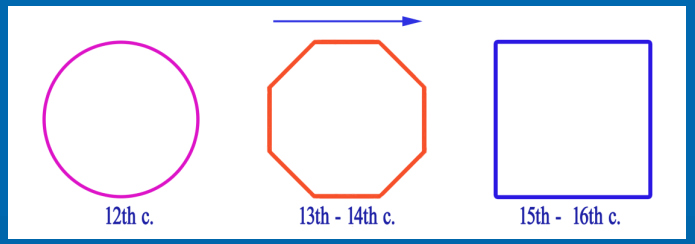
# SG304A.3.1 Church Labyrinths - Geometries




CARRÉS : a. Saint-Omer - b. Gand - c. Bourn - d. Mailly-Maillet (centre) – OCTOGONES : e. Amiens - f. Sélestat - g. Reims - h. Ely – CERCLES : j. Ravenne - k. Sens - l. Chartres - m. Bayeux.

**The earliest labyrinths of the classical "golden age" (12-13th c.) were circular - *bottom of diagram at left*. Then the octagonal shape appeared - *middle of diagram*. And finally, the square / rectangular labyrinths (15-16th c.) show the drift towards the "maze" - *top of diagram.***

**This evolution from circle to polygon to square is the traditional progression from spirit-focus to matter-focus (the circle of spirit and the square of matter). It illustrates in history-time the change from the medieval era of faith-in-god to the Renaissance era of faith-in-man.**




**Note: this alternation of shapes (from circle to square) has been historically played out at least twice:**

- **Greek era. Circular "Cretan" labyrinths.**
- **Roman era. Square shapes.**
- **Medieval. Circular labyrinths.**
- **Renaissance. Square/rectangular "mazes-labyrinths".**

**Right now, we are witnessing and co-creating a "return forward" to the unicursal circular labyrinths guiding to spiritual integration.**

**← The various geometries of labyrinths in churches & cathedrals. (P. de Saint-Hilaire. *L'Univers Secret du Labyrinthe*.)**

# SG304A.3.2.1 Circular Church Labys (1) Sens

Labyrinth of Sens (as reported and misidentified by Kern).
Possibly the earliest cathedral labyrinth.
33ft. Destroyed in 1768.
(H. Kern. *Through the Labyrinth*.)

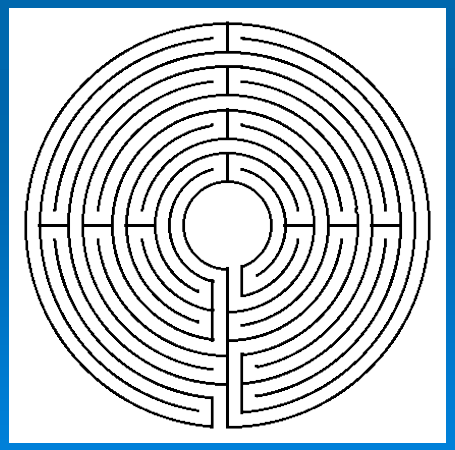
The archetypal medieval circular labyrinth is widely recognized as the Chartres labyrinth. We are devoting several pages to Chartres (infra).

Other historical circular labyrinths, in France, are the labyrinths at Sens and Bayeux. Examples are also found in Italy and Ireland.

Sens was a place of considerable importance in the 12th century, seat of the "Primate of Gaul" and superior to the bishopric of Paris. The cathedral church was therefore built on a large scale according to the latest principles. The nave at Sens is unusually wide, and the church is larger in overall scale than its contemporaries at Saint Denis, or Senlis.

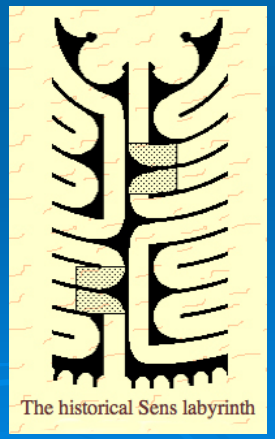
Sens labyrinth was constructed in the late 12th century. It was located below the organ gallery, directly behind the West portal. With a diameter of 10 meters, it spanned the entire width of the nave, as reported by Abbé Chauveau in 1847. For the Sens labyrinth, Easter dances are also documented: according to a chapter resolution of April 14th, 1413, the traditional gamer was supposed to be played on the labyrinth during Easter service. (Source: H. Kern).

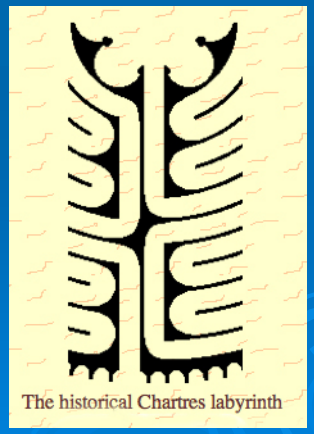
The labyrinth was destroyed in 1768 (on account of the disturbance caused by children playing on it) and replaced by a plain floor.



The "authentic" Sens labyrinth (as reported by Hébert), according to a document discovered by Craig Wright in 1996.

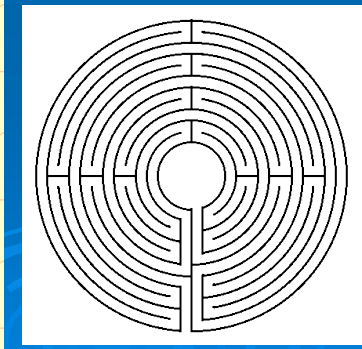
Sens
(floor version)



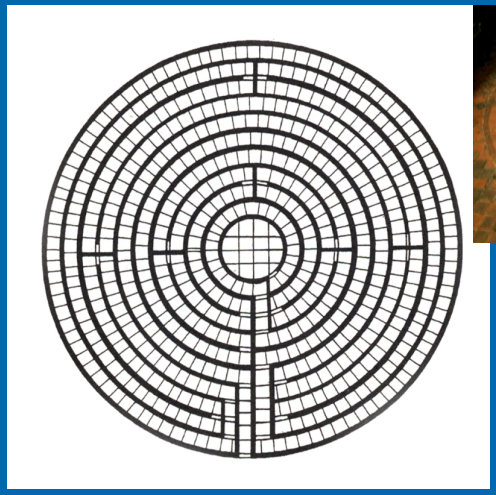




Differences between Chartres & authentic Sens labyrinth designs. (Labyreims.com)

Chartres (script)



# SG304A.3.2.2 Circular Church Labys (2) Bayeux & Mirepoix

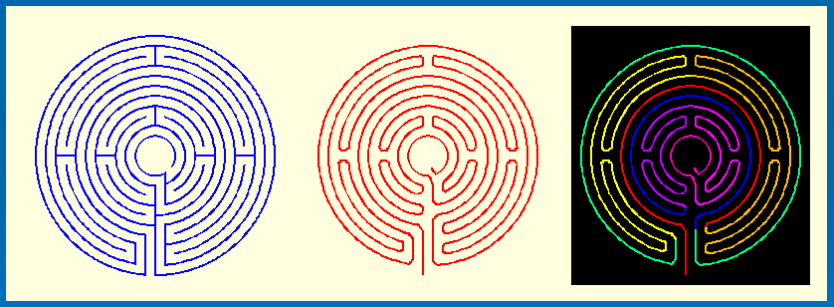


↑ Bayeux. Credit

←↑ Labyrinth of Bayeux. 13th c. Chapter house of the Cathedral, Normandy, France.

(Ketley-Laporte. *Le Labyrinthe déchiffré.*)

The Bayeux labyrinth is not in the nave of the cathedral but in the middle of the chapter house (13th century). The size is modest (3.8 meters / 12.5 ft) and there are only ten circuits. Also unusual is the placement of the entrance - facing South.

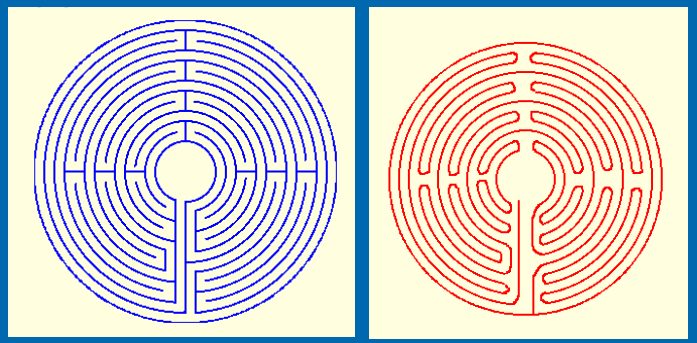


↑ Bayeux. Left: walls. Center: path. Right: Color-coded path. (Credit).

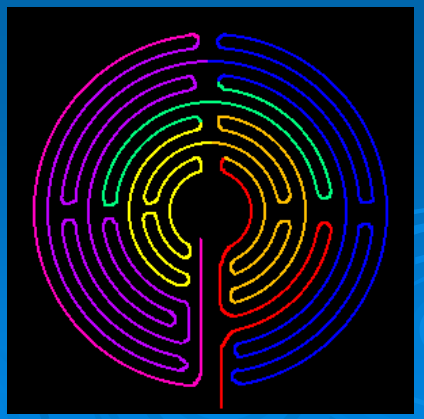
The layout of Bayeux does not match that of either the Chartres or Sens models:
- One walks the outer part of the maze first, then the inner part.
- There are 3 paths making a complete circuit before doubling back on themselves: the outer green path, the initial red path in the middle, and the final pink path.
- All other medieval labyrinths have a wall going from the outside straight to the centre. The Bayeux pattern's final circuit interrupts this wall.

## Mirepoix →

The labyrinth in the cathedral of Mirepoix, France is a glazed pattern on nine tiles. If you reverse this pattern, it is almost the same as the Chartres pattern. Three of the "arms" are identical to Chartres as well as one side of the remaining "arm". The only part that differs is the final path to the centre: it is straight. (Credit).



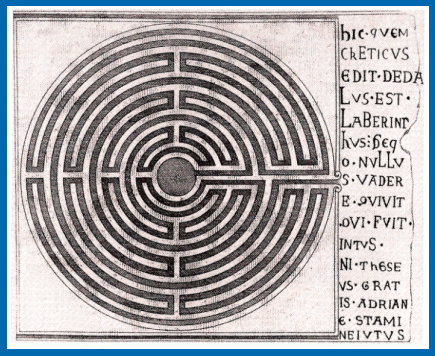
↑ Mirepoix. Left: walls. Right: path.



← Mirepoix: color-coded path.

(Credit).

# SG304A.3.2.3 Circular Church Labys (3) Guingamp & Lucca



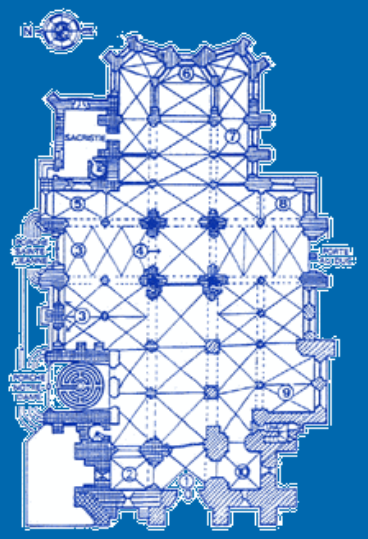

🡅 In Lucca (Cathedral of San Martino), a vertical relief was chiseled on the North side of the campanile. This labyrinth is identical to the Chartres labyrinth and is probably a mini-scale model of the actual labyrinth. The importance of this relief is that it may pre-date the famous Chartres labyrinth, yet is of the Chartres pattern that became a standard for medieval labyrinths.

The inscription says: HIC QUEM CRETICUS EDIT DAEDALUS EST LABERINTHUS, DE QUO NULLUS VADERE QUIVIT QUI FUIT INTUS, NI THESEUS GRATIS ADRIANE STAMINE JUTUS. (This is the labyrinth built by Dedalus of Crete. All who entered therein were lost, save Theseus, thanks to Ariadne's thread.)

## Lucca, Italy

## Guingamp

🡇🡆 Labyrinthe de Guingamp, Brittany, France.
Basilica Notre Dame de Bon Secours.



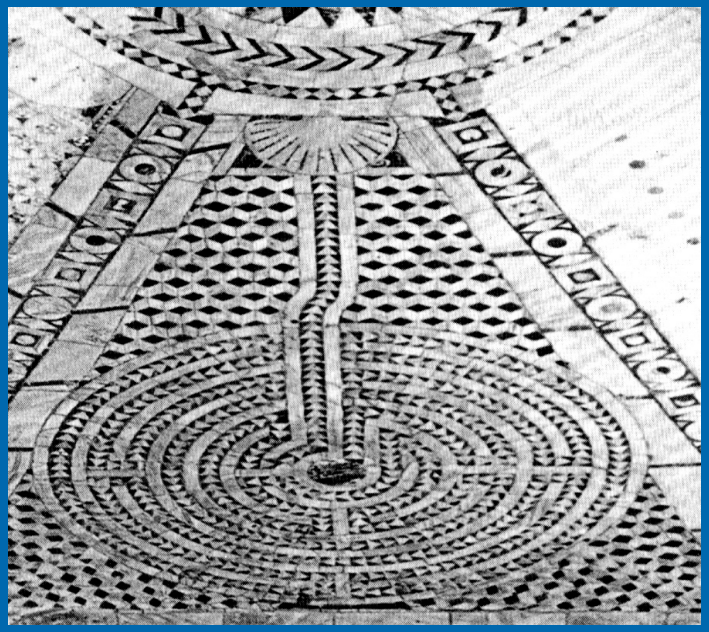
🡅 Images: //crownedplaces.canalblog.com

The Guingamp labyrinth is located directly on the North porch, at the foot of a Black Virgin. It is a small replica of the Chartres labyrinth. The black center stone reads "Ave Maria".

Sacred Geometry note: at Guingamp, the length of the nave, the transept and the height of the large tower are in the golden ratio PHI.

🡄 labyrinthos.net

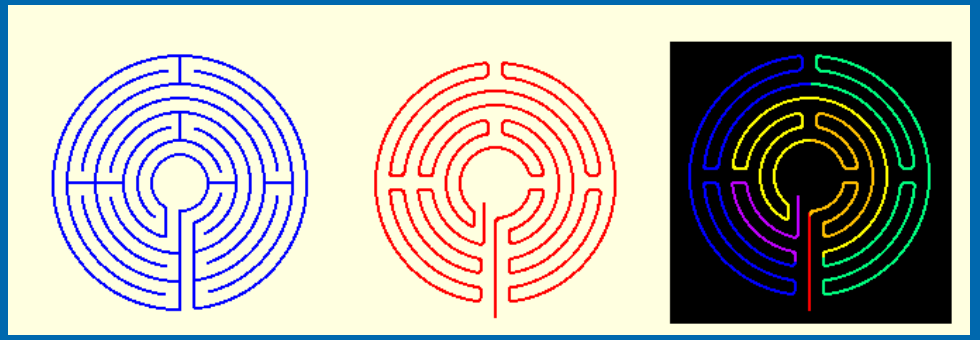
# SG304A.3.2.4 Circular Church Labyrinths (4) Ravenna



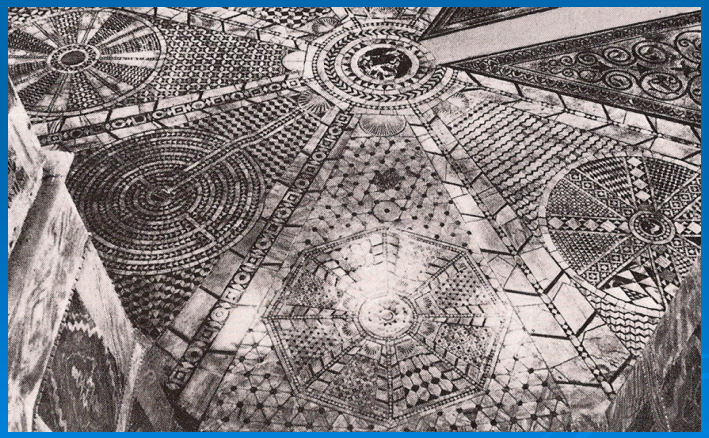
↑ Labyrinth of Ravenne, Italy.
Small triangles are arrows to show the "way to the center"
(P. Saint-Hilaire. *L'Univers Secret du Labyrinthe.*)

In the Basilica di San Vitale, in Ravenna, Italy, there is a pavement in the form of a labyrinth, laid out in the 16th century. The diameter is 12 ft.

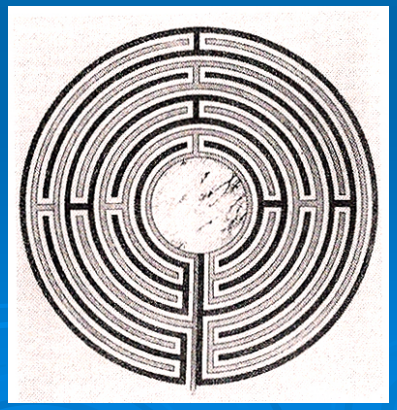
The design is noteworthy because of the clear indication of "going to the center". Also note the small triangular arrows showing the way, from the center out.



↑ Ravenna labyrinth. Left: walls. Middle: path. Right: color code. (Credit)
This labyrinth takes you straight to the centre, then walks you through the inner part, then the outer part, and finally takes you wiggling back to the centre.



↑ A top view of the mosaic floor, with the labyrinth on the left.



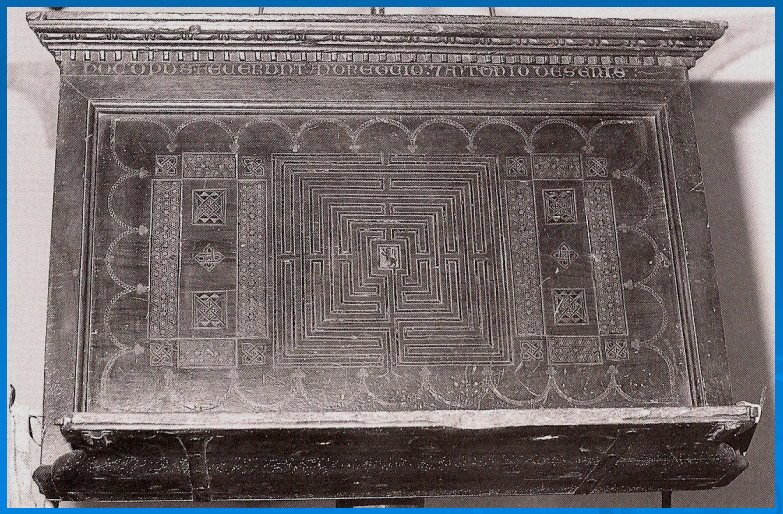
↑ Mosaic labyrinth. Rome.
Dated 1189.

➔ Model of the small floor labyrinth in Toulouse, Chapelle de la Prévôté.

# SG304A.3.2.5 Circular Church Labys (5) Italy & Ireland

← Convent church of San Pietro in Pontremoli, Italy. This is the only remnant of the building. 12th century.

Both the convent & church were an important stopover for pilgrims on their way to Rome, the Holy Land or Santiago de Compostella.



↓ Lectern. Volterra cathedral, Italy. Late 14th c.
The square, 11-rings labyrinth is of the Chartres-type. The path is dark and the walls are inlaid with lighter wood. (H. Kern)

↑ Parish church of Rathmore, County Meath, Ireland. Limestone relief of a Chartres-type labyrinth found during restoration in 1931.

Angels holding labyrinths.

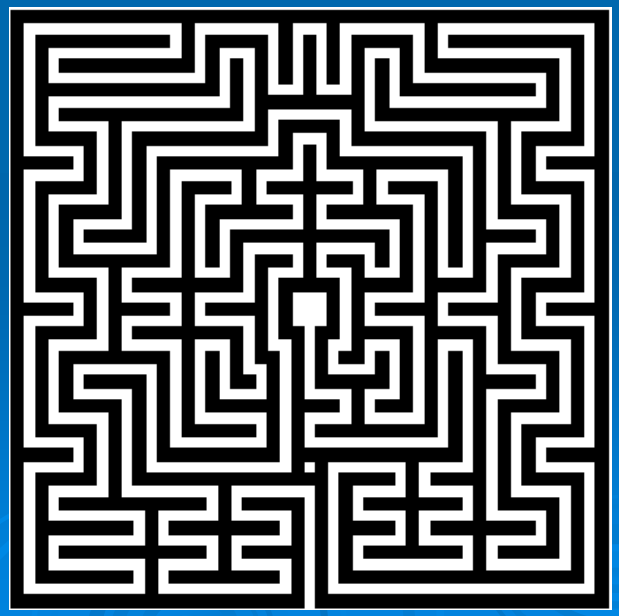
Watts Chapel, Compton, Surrey, England.

# SG304A.3.3 Square Church Labyrinths

Entirely unique from other French pavement labyrinths, the one which once existed in St. Bertin was neither circular nor octagonal: it was square. Additionally, while most pavement labyrinths were/are located in the church nave, the one at St. Bertin is described as being located in the southern transept. Despite its square dimensions the labyrinth of St. Bertin was not based on the ancient Roman model: its pattern is unique.

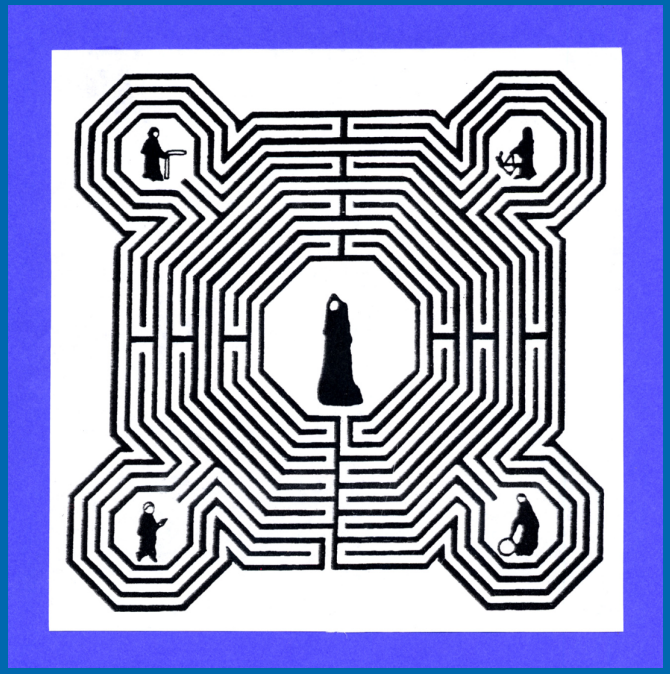
Composed of blue-black (walls) and white stones (path), this labyrinth had an estimated width of about 10.85 meters and was probably set in place in 1350. A significant detail is that a large cross was set atop the center, which asserts the Christian character of the design. The labyrinth of St. Bertin was destroyed in the early 19th century, at the same period its relatives in Reims, Sens, and Auxerre were removed. However a replica of the St. Bertin labyrinth has survived and can be found in a court-chapel in Ghent. Having been placed there in 1533, it is generally thought to be an accurate reconstruction. Another replica was built in the mid-19th century in the pavement of the St. Omer cathedral, near the St. Bertin Abbey.

← Labyrinth of St.-Omer. 16th century.
The labyrinth is located at the crossing of the nave and the transepts. It is the 1/4 size reproduction of the original labyrinth (48 feet. ca. 1200) in the abbey church of St-Bertin. It was destroyed in the 19th century.



↙↓ Labyrinth of Ghent. Chapel of Hotel de Ville. Belgium. 1533. 46 x 37 ft. (P. de Saint-Hilaire.) Extant.

# SG304A.3.4.1 Octagonal Church Labys (1) Reims



↑ Labyrinth of Reims. Notre-Dame Cathedral. Built in 1290. Destroyed in 1779 by Church canon Jacquemart who was annoyed by the "hilarious ado on the labyrinth" (children playing)! Labyrinth & laughter became forbidden.

As with the labyrinth at Amiens Cathedral, the design was based on the octagon, an 8 sided polygon geometry. The rebirth symbology of the number 8 had long been incorporated into the baptismal fonts of Christian churches. [◆SG202]

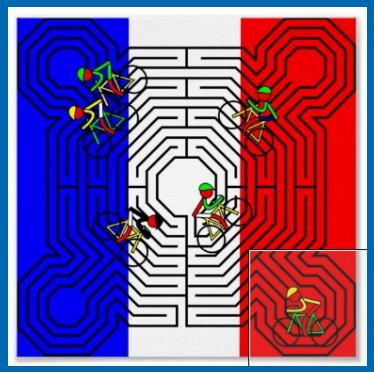
In the 4 inter-corners of the Reims labyrinth are found the effigies of the four main architects of the cathedral, encountered in the order of the labyrinth path (starting bottom right, going counter-clockwise).

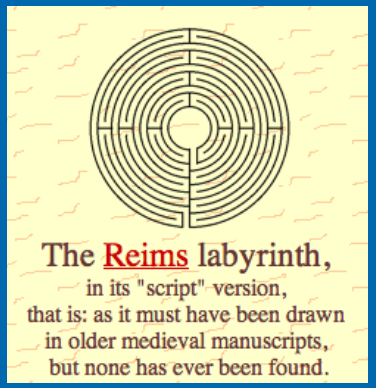
Historical note: Reims cathedral has been the sacred site where most of the Kings of France, since Clovis (465-511), were enthroned. The future king would cross the Labyrinth in the middle (exempted from going through the meanders), thus walking the Middle Path / Axis of the World.

↑ Reims cathedral

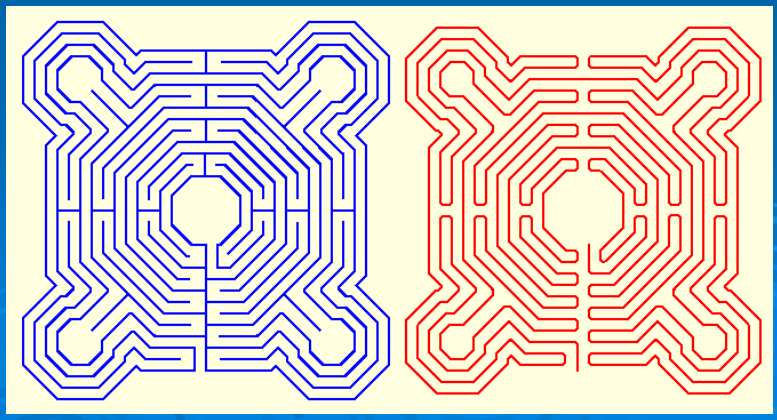
Poster → of a Tour de France.

(imagekind.com)






← Credit.



← Labyreims.com

← The Reims labyrinth in floor version (left) and walking version or *Thread of Ariadne* (right).

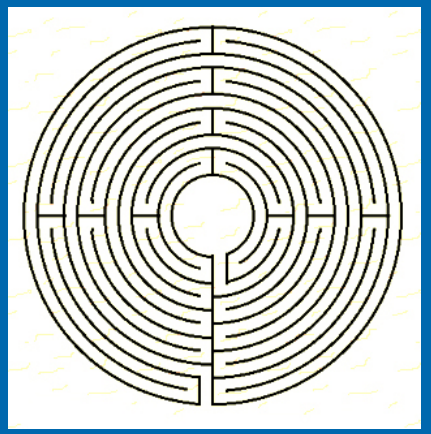
Credit.

# SG304A.3.4.2 Octagonal Church
# Labys (2) Reims (2)

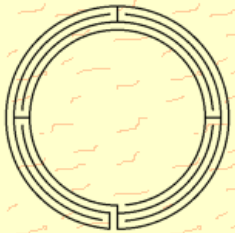
In its "script" (circular) version, the Reims labyrinth is divided into 3 tracks, as explained by Jacques Hébert in his site www.labyreims.com. The second track has been used as the design of a garden labyrinth at the St. Michael Anglican Church, Sillery, Quebec. The Reims design was modified in two ways:

- The medieval labyrinth is formed of two "wall" systems united on the central axis. If we split the wall section along that axis, the two systems become completely separate. Here, the two systems are differentiated by using two different plant types: one is a shrub hedge, the other is made of fine herbs and flowers. That differentiation emphasizes the lateralized aspects of the walk through the labyrinth.

- The design was further modified by adding a direct shortcut way of access to the center or place of ascension. The shortcut also offers the option to come out directly of the labyrinth.

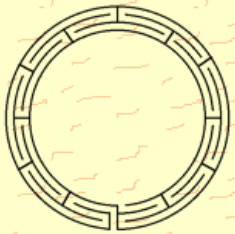


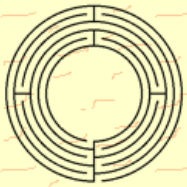
← Script version of the Reims labyrinth.



Reims, first "track"
(three first lanes),

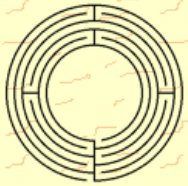
related to greek traditional
decorative motif
called maeander, used here
as a page border motif:



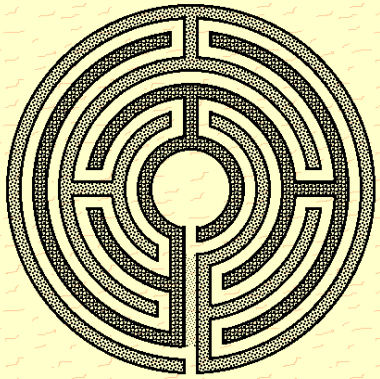


Reims, second "track"
(lanes 4 to 8).

Lateral inversion (mirror image)
results in a clockwise run,
and becomes the model
for the St-Michael's labyrinth:



Reims, third "track"
(lanes 9 to 11),
inverted repetition of first "track".



Credit: website by J. Hébert. www.labyreims.com

The St. Michael labyrinth. →

# SG304A.3.4.3 Octagonal Church Labys (3) Amiens

Labyrinth of Amiens. 1230. Notre-Dame Cathedral. ↑←↓

Middle of main nave. 43+ ft diameter. Destroyed in 1828, it was replaced, with exactitude, in 1894. (Ketley-Laporte. *Le Labyrinthe Déchiffré.*)

(Credit)

Just as Chartres was being finished, Amiens was being started. It was completed around 1289. Although Reims is more ornate, Amiens is the largest of the Gothic cathedrals. Contrary to other church labyrinths, the Amiens labyrinth is available to the public.

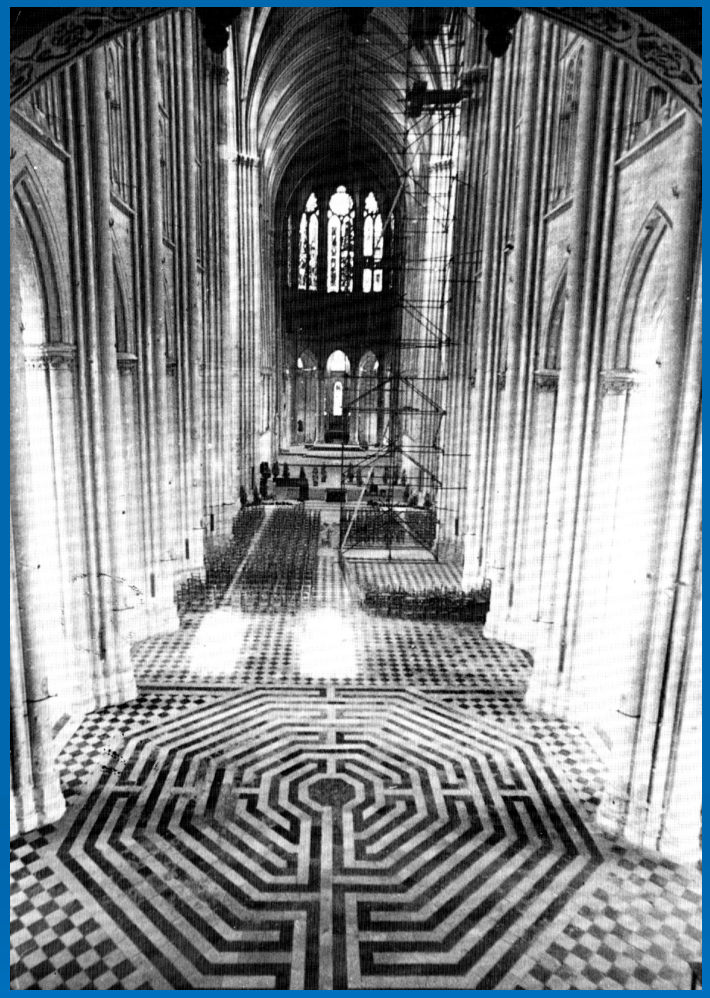
The Amiens labyrinth is the reverse of Chartres, in an octagonal geometry. The pilgrim follows the black path and the first turn is on the right. Since it is made out of tiles, the paths and the lines between the paths are the same width.

Chartres, Amiens and Saint-Quentin cathedral labyrinths were all laid out in the same pattern. They were formed by 11 concentric circles that contained a single path which slowly leads to a center rosette. The path makes 28 loops, seven on the left side toward the center, then seven on the right side toward the center, followed by seven on the left side toward the outside, and finally seven on the right side toward the outside, ending in a short straight path to the rosette.

↑ Amiens. The octagonal labyrinth. (Wikipedia).

← Amiens. Top view of the nave. (Credit)

# SG304A.3.4.4 Octagonal Church Labys (4) St Quentin & Selestat



↑ Labyrinth of Saint-Quentin. 1495. 38 ft diameter.

## Saint-Quentin

The labyrinth in the parish church of the Basilica of Saint-Quentin consists of black and white stones that cover the entire pavement of the nave of the church. The center of the labyrinth is black. This labyrinth with all the characteristic features of Amiens, was copied from Chartres. The Basilica of St.-Quentin started construction in 1195 and took 300 years to complete.

↑ In Saint-Quentin, a seven pointed star invites pilgrims to enter the labyrinth.

## Selestat

In Eglise Sainte-Foy, Selestat, France, there is an octagonal mosaic labyrinth, modeled after Amiens.

↑↑ The labyrinth. Eglise Sainte-Foy, Selestat, France.
Credit.

# SG304A.3.5 Tree-Like Church Laby - Poitiers

↑ The Poitiers labyrinth redesigned.

**Labyrinth of Poitiers. Saint-Pierre Cathedral.**

Originally placed in the main nave's pavement (third bay) of Saint-Pierre Cathedral, the labyrinth was a 10-ring design, with a white path. Now destroyed, the Poitiers labyrinth is remembered by a small scale (3 x 2 ft) graffito, on the wall of the left nave.

The design is unique and organic in shape and feeling, looking like a tree, a hand or a brain. An Australian labyrinth site states: *"The pattern is like a weeping myall and looks Australian."* (Note: a *weeping myall* is a species of wattle native to Australia and looking pendulous in form.)

The Poitiers design offers options, and so it is more like a maze, but a maze that brings you back to the center. Taking the straight white path ahead takes you directly to the center. Taking the circuitous white path lets you enter from the top or from the bottom left: either way, you can't make it to the center. Following the Ariadne's Thread and walking the black path eventually takes you around a loop and brings you back to the entrance.

Herman Kern comments: *"The drawing contains a number of errors: there is no real center marking the end of the path but a choice between two paths… Ignoring this inaccuracy, the fact that this drawing corresponds precisely with the thread of Ariadne of the labyrinth in Chartres shows that a typical church labyrinth with four semi-axes was intended there."*

↑ The Poitiers labyrinth incised on the wall.

The Labyrinth and the Tree are closely related symbols.

Labyrinth Tree. → By Marcia Snedecor.

Credit.

← The World Tree. The Wild Wood Tarot #21. By Mark Ryan and John Matthews.

Credit.

# SG304A.3.6.1 The Labyrinth of Chartres (1) Uses

↑ This 18th century's engraving shows the social & community life in the cathedral.

During the medieval Renaissance, cathedrals & churches were the houses of the people, always open and mostly empty - a community meeting ground. In places located on pilgrimage routes to the final destination of Compostella, Spain, cathedrals were functioning as motels for pilgrims, restaurants, hospitals and, generally speaking, social playgrounds where news would be exchanged and needs, be they secular or spiritual, would be met. All under the holy patronage of the Divine and its saints.

Cathedrals were also places of celebration, not only for liturgical ceremonies like the Christian Mass, but also for community gatherings and events. For example, in Chartres, there was a yearly event where people would exchange their usual social & professional roles for an entire day: a teenager would enact the bishop, a clergyman would become a merchant… thus co-creating a collective catharsis of role playing and performing healing in good humor by easing many personal and community tensions.

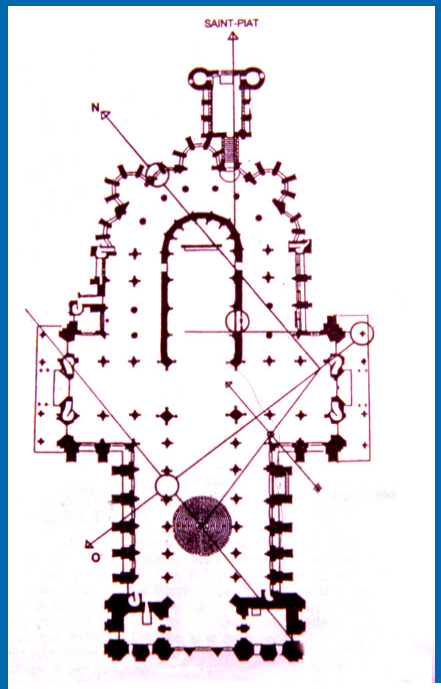
Although originally built as a proxy mini-journey to Jerusalem, the Chartres labyrinth was a multi-purpose installation and was not necessarily serious: it certainly was a playground for the kids roaming it.

↑ The city of Chartres in 1568.

The Chartres Labyrinth was called "la Lieue" (league) thus referring to the time needed to walk "on the knees" the 860 ft path. Also known as the *"Chemin de Jerusalem"*, the Chartres labyrinth was walked (or "kneeled") by pilgrims unable to join the Crusades to Jerusalem. The Church would grant them special "privileges", similar to those granted the actual pilgrims.

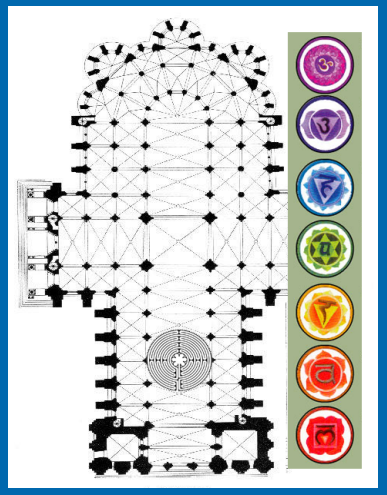
↑ 19th c. drawing of pilgrims "kneeling" the labyrinth at Sneinton, Nottinghamshire. H. Kern)

# SG304A.3.6.2 The Labyrinth of Chartres (2) Location



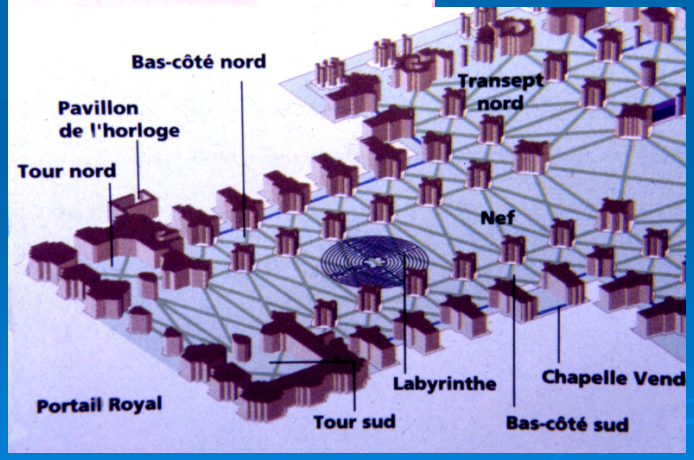

The labyrinth takes up the entire width of the nave and, since the floor was an open space until the 19th century (when chairs covered it entirely), the labyrinth was the main feature attracting the eye… and the feet.

Pilgrims entering from the West portal were powerfully drawn (and almost obliged) to first walk the labyrinth. Their energy systems & consciousness transformed by the vortex process, they would then proceed to advance to the center and reach the altar and the holy relic of "Mary's Veil".

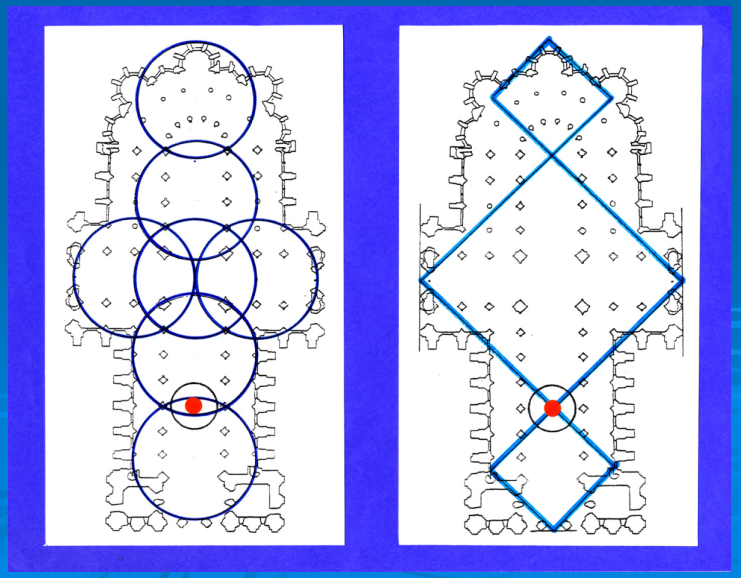


↑ The labyrinth is the bridge between the 2nd and 3rd chakras.

Credit

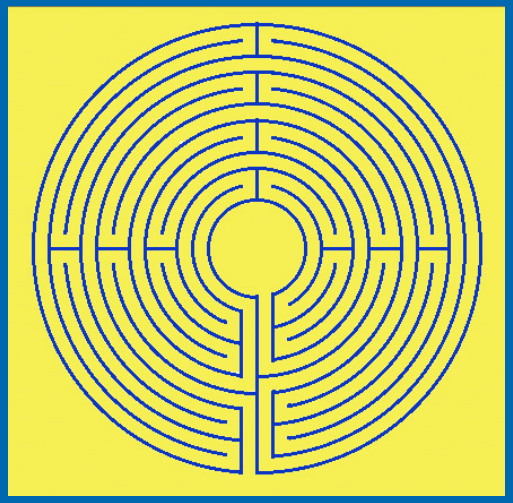



↑ Plan & elevation view of the Chartres Labyrinth, the most ancient church labyrinth in Europe. ~ 43 ft diameter. ~ 860 ft path.



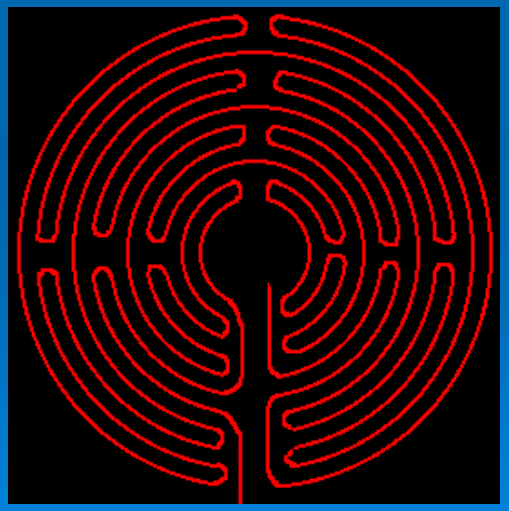
← Two geometric lay-outs for the Chartres Cathedral, showing the strategic location of the labyrinth (orange dot).
Left: Jean Villette.
Right: John James.

# SG304A.3.7.1 Chartres Labyrinth (1) Path



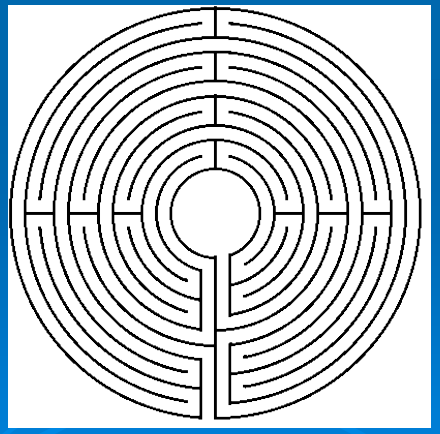
🡅 Walls of Chartres laby.

🡇 Path of Chartres Laby

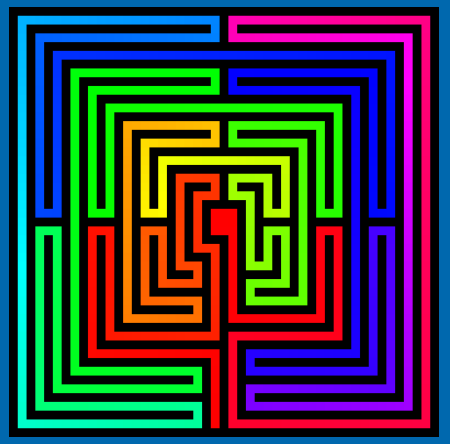


(Above images Credit)

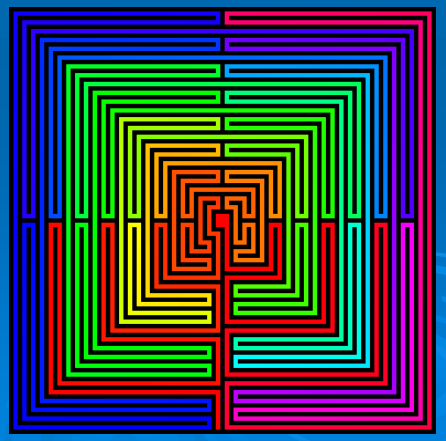
🡅 Chartres labyrinth in "Floor" version (as it still exists). There are 28 full "turns" and 4 level jumps.



🡅 Chartres Labyrinth in "Script" version (as it was drawn in medieval manuscripts).



🡅 Square Chartres labyrinth rainbow colored by Andrew Hardwick. (//duramecho.com)
The medieval labyrinth has four quadrants like the Roman labyrinth but with a more complex arrangement of folds: following the path takes the pilgrim around the circle whereas, in the Roman labyrinth, each quadrant is completed individually in sequence.



🡄 Double repeat square Chartres laby.

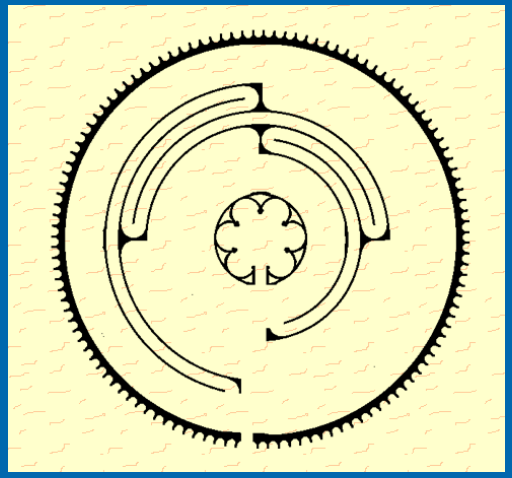
Andrew Hardwick.

# SG304A.3.7.2 Chartres Labyrinth (2) Inner Pulse

The website www.labyreims.com shares the pioneering research done by Jacques Hébert (1938 - 2007). He discovered that the path of the medieval labyrinth is rhythmical, i.e. built from certain rhythmical motifs repeated and arranged in a very intentional fashion. For J. Hébert, the drawing of the medieval labyrinth is a *"graphical solution to a rhythmical problem"*. In other words, Hébert recognized patterns of symmetry and harmony in the designs of the medieval labyrinths.

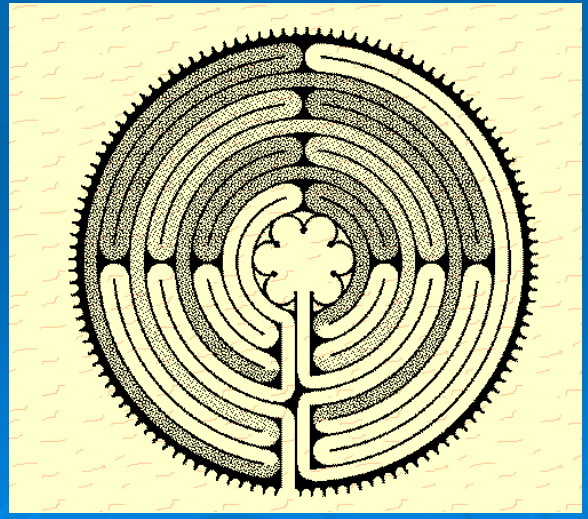
Specifically, Hébert found a fundamental rhythm repeated 3 times throughout the entire design, similar to 3 different octaves of the same chord in a musical script. This ternary harmonic structure, explains J. Hébert, is anterior and primary to any symbolic intention or metaphoric understanding and adds an inner texture to the dynamics of the labyrinth. It is suggested to use sound/chant to mark the 3 "octaves".

From this comes the notion of canonical (or perfect) labyrinth: there exists a certain number of possible canonical labyrinths (numbered to 20 by Hébert), of which only three are known to have existed historically: those of the cathedrals of Chartres, Sens and Reims. [See supra: Typology of Labyrinths / Mathematical Types.]



↑ The fundamental rhythm
or inner pulse of the Chartres labyrinth.
This rhythm is repeated 3 times.

↑ Chartres labyrinth design



↑ Triple repetition of the inner pulse pattern.

## Canonical Labyrinths

Canonical means embodying the rules (canon) of being perfect. There are two of the rhythmical properties in the path structures of the Chartres and Reims labyrinths which define them as perfect or canonical and distinguish them from the non-canonical labyrinth designs:

- All segments of the path are quarter-circles or half-circles: no segments longer than that.
- The sequence of the elements of the path is reversible: i.e. identical elements occupy the same position in the sequence going in the labyrinth and going out of it.

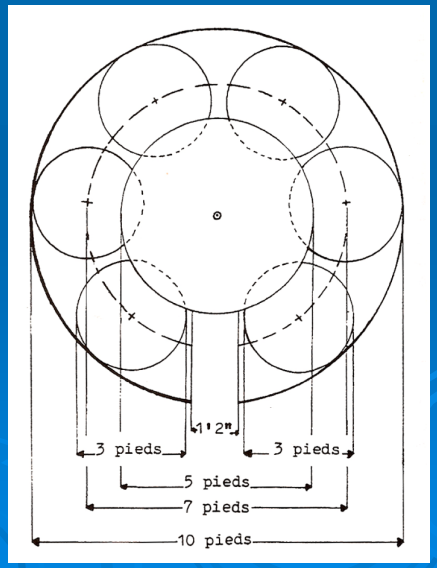
# SG304A.3.8.1 Chartres Design (1) The Flower

← Chartres. The center Flower. Credit.

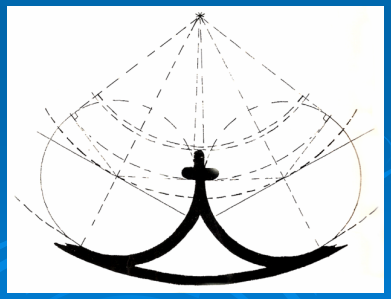
The Flower in the Labyrinth →
(seen in a window case, strolling along the streets of Chartres.)

The geometry of the central flower has received various explanations, in terms of its own proportions and its relationship to the whole labyrinth.

We give below the interpretation offered by J. & O. Ketley-Laporte in their book *Chartres, Le Labyrinthe Déchiffré* (1992).

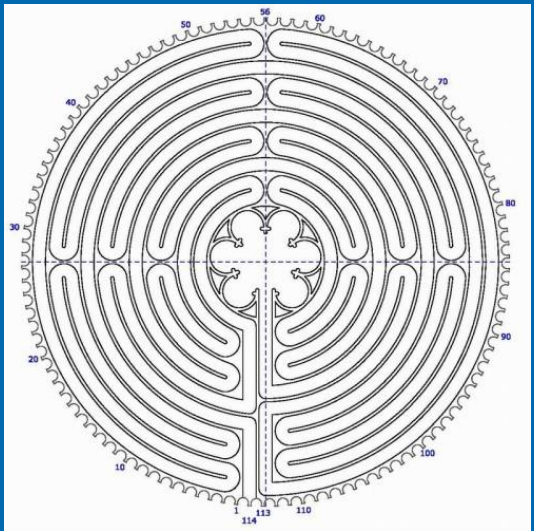



← This construction highlights the harmonic & symbolic numbers 3, 5, 7 and 10.



↑ The "trefoil" design points to the center where the 6 circles meet.

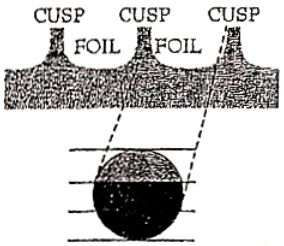
# SG304A.3.8.2 Chartres Design (2)
# Labrys & Lunations



**↑ There are 113 visible "lunations" + 1 fitting the entrance. 114 = 6 (central petals) x 19 (number of perfection). Also: 1 + 1 + 4 = 6.**

**The circles forming the halo around the outside of the labyrinth are sometimes called *lunations* because they are believed to comprise a lunar calendar (28 x 4 quadrants). With such a calendar, one can determine the date for Easter (the first Sunday after the first full moon following the spring equinox).**

**This peripheral circle of lunations, unique to Chartres, forms a boundary protecting the inner world of the labyrinth and differentiating it from the external world. It is the equivalent of an organic membrane that both expels (the "teeth" or "cusps") and receives (the "cups" or "foils"). There is only one opening between lunation #1 and #113: this is the invisible lunation #114 corresponding to the width of the path; this is where the pilgrim "pierces" the membrane to start navigating towards the center of the labyrinth.**

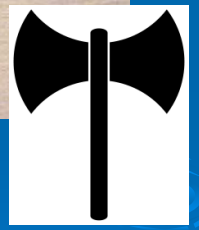



**← The "lunations" are the semi-circles ("foils") on the periphery of the labyrinth. There are 28 and one half foils and 28 cusps per quadrant. Each quadrant marks a quarter of the year.**

**The "labrys" symbol**

**↑ Minoan labrys.**

**Modern labrys →**



**A "labrys" is a symmetrical double-headed axe originally associated with the Minoan culture (2nd millennium BCE) where it was a symbol of priestess power & creativity. The symbol evolved to indicate a harmonic balance between two polarities.**

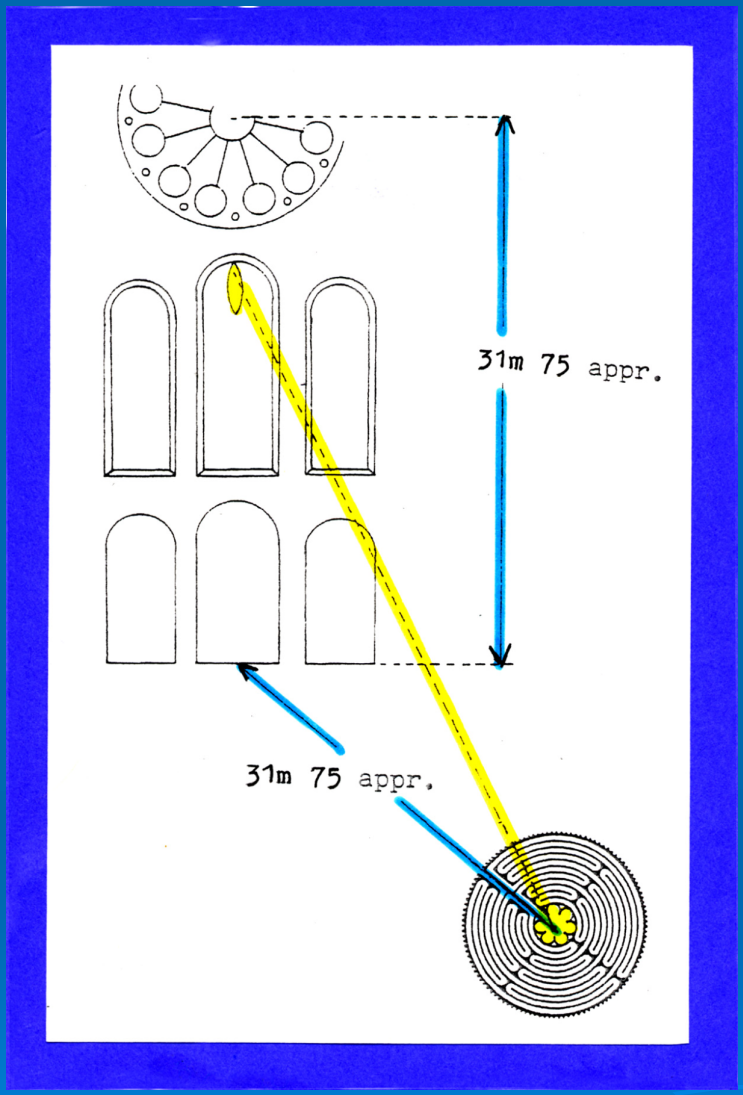
**↑↓↓ Credit.**

**← The entrance with the invisible lunation.**

**← One of the 10 *labrys* (top of the labyrinth).**
**A *Labrys* is a double-axe design occurring when two paths are meeting head-on and turning back.**

***"The labyrinth is a system of 12 rings with an inner formation for 6 persons.***
***There are "lunations" (partial circles) in the outer ring separated by flat prongs. These lunations are representative of outer circles overlapping those that are seen to form a series of Vesica shapes separated by the linking flat faces of the prongs.***
***I believe that this outer circumference is a fundamental "string" that when plucked will form vibrational nodes along the string, thus specifying the fundamental frequency for the system."***
**(Bill Buehler as quoted in: www.goldenmean.info/buehler/chartresmusic.html)**

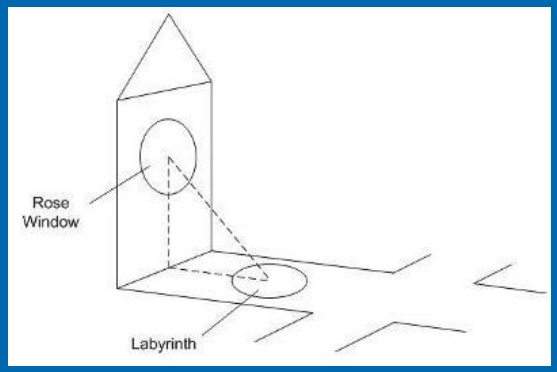
# SG304A.3.9 Chartres Labyrinth & West Rose




**Illumination event of August 22.**
**(Ketley-Laporte. *The Labyrinthe Déchiffré*.)**

**The Chartres labyrinth has long been known for two special resonance properties:**

**• IN SPACE: an approximate mirror symmetry with the West Rose. The labyrinth, laid on the earth, is a mandala mirror of the great West rose, set in the sky. It has a diameter close to the diameter of the rose (~ 40 ft) and its distance from the West portal is similar to the distance from the rose to the floor (104 ft / 31.75 meters).**




**← Spatial symmetry of the Rose and the Labyrinth. A line drawn from the centre of the labyrinth to the center of the rose window would form the hypotenuse of an isosceles triangle. (Credit).**

**However, this often quoted "fact" is only a close "resonance". If we look at the exact mathematics, there are some discrepancies. As reported by Jeff Saward, the diameter of the rose = 11.9 meters (or 13.6 meters with the moulding), while the labyrinth's diameter is about 12.9 meters. Even more approximation involves the difference between the height of the rose and the distance from the labyrinth to the base of the West wall: about 3 meters. The triangle would not be equilateral and the angles would not exactly be 45º.**

**Does that invalidates the general concept of "symbolic resonance" between rose and labyrinth? Not at all. To the naked eye and the heart, the labyrinth IS a terrestrial rose and the rose IS a celestial labyrinth.**

**• IN TIME: a direct "line of light" with the Virgin Mary's Day of Assumption, via the *Vesica* on top of the main stain-glass window in the West portal.**
**On August 22 of our "Gregorian calendar" [*which corresponds to August 15 in the old "Julian calendar*"], the Western sun penetrates through the Vesica shape (picturing the Virgin Mary) on top of the "Annunciation" stain-glass window and comes to illuminate the center of the Labyrinth. August 15 is the traditional Christian celebration of the Virgin Mary's Assumption. Note: the *Vesica* is the primordial symbol of the "Cosmic Doorway" between the worlds. [◆SG108]**

# SG304A.3.10 Chartres Labyrinth & Numbers

*In SG207.3, we met Australian architect John James who made the most extensive study of Chartres Cathedral. On his website, John James shares some comments on the numerology of the labyrinth. (www.johnjames.com.au)*

*"The meanings that seem to have been embedded into the labyrinth are both Christian and Muslim. One set comes from the Gnostic tradition of the Chartres School, and the other from Sufi beliefs. Though the two sides were at war in the crusades, the mystic arms of both religions were pursuing the same goals.*

*11 RINGS - The Chartres labyrinth has eleven tracks, or rings. 11 is a somewhat non-Christian number. Its source may be Eastern. In early Hindu numerology the most important shrines had 11 roofs, as in Bali today. The Koran sets out the 99 (11 x 9) most names for God that encompass the whole of His creation, to which is added the un-nameable name.*

*THE CURVED PATHS - When you follow the path round the labyrinth, you walk around the left inner rings first, then the centre ones and finally those on the right. After this you do the left outside rings, and then the right. Notice how symmetrical the pattern is, and how orderly.*

*THE LENGTH - The length through the labyrinth is 261.55 meters, measured along the centre of the tracks. This is exactly 740 Ped Manualis, one of the two foot units used by the constructor of the labyrinth [named "Scarlet" by James John]. The number 740 is also 20 times 37. Now 37 is a prime number. Three times this is 111, and eighteen times is 666.*

*THE COGS - Around the outside of the labyrinth there are 112 cogs, plus two halves at the entrance. The circumference of the circle taken through the centers of all the cogs measures 114 Ped Manualis, or one Ped per cog. The entrance being to the left of centre there are 55 cogs on one side and 57 on the other.*
*The 8th century Arab Sufi-alchemist Jabir ibn Hayyan divided the four elementary qualities of existence (earth, air, fire and water) into four degrees with seven subdivisions giving a total of 112 classifications which between them contained all the materials, liquids and gasses found in manifest creation. This is 111+1. Four times 28 is 112, perhaps reference to four lunar months. 112 is also the number of years the moon takes to repeat the Metonic cycle 6 times, and this is the cycle which determines the date for Easter.*

*THE TRACKS AND THE NUMBER 35 - The labyrinth has 31 curved tracks and 4 straight ones, 35 altogether. There are 28 half-round changes of direction and six quarter changes, 34 in total."*

**NUMEROLOGY of LABYRINTH NUMBERS - In the ancient system of Gematria, each letter of the Greek and Latin alphabets was also a number, and so numbers had a word translation. [◆SG202 and SG306]. The labyrinth numbers all have special meanings, specially in the Christian culture context. For instance, 740 / 4 (the 4 quadrants) = MARIA EST ASSUMPTA. 35 = BEATA VIRGO MARIA. 35 x 2 = 70 = JESUS. 35 x 3 = TRINITAS etc… The Chartres labyrinth contains "numerical mantras" in the form of rhythms.**

## Chartres labyrinth statistics

**Length: 261.55 meters (measured along the center of the tracks) = 740 *Ped Manualis*, the measure used by the labyrinth's builder).**

**Diameter: 12.9 meters.**

**Width of the paths. They average 34 cm (13 1/4 inches) with a 7.5 cm (3 inches) wall separating each path. However, there is variation in the width of individual path stones and the mortar joint between the stones also varies considerably, taking up much of the difference between individual stones. (Jeff Saward).**

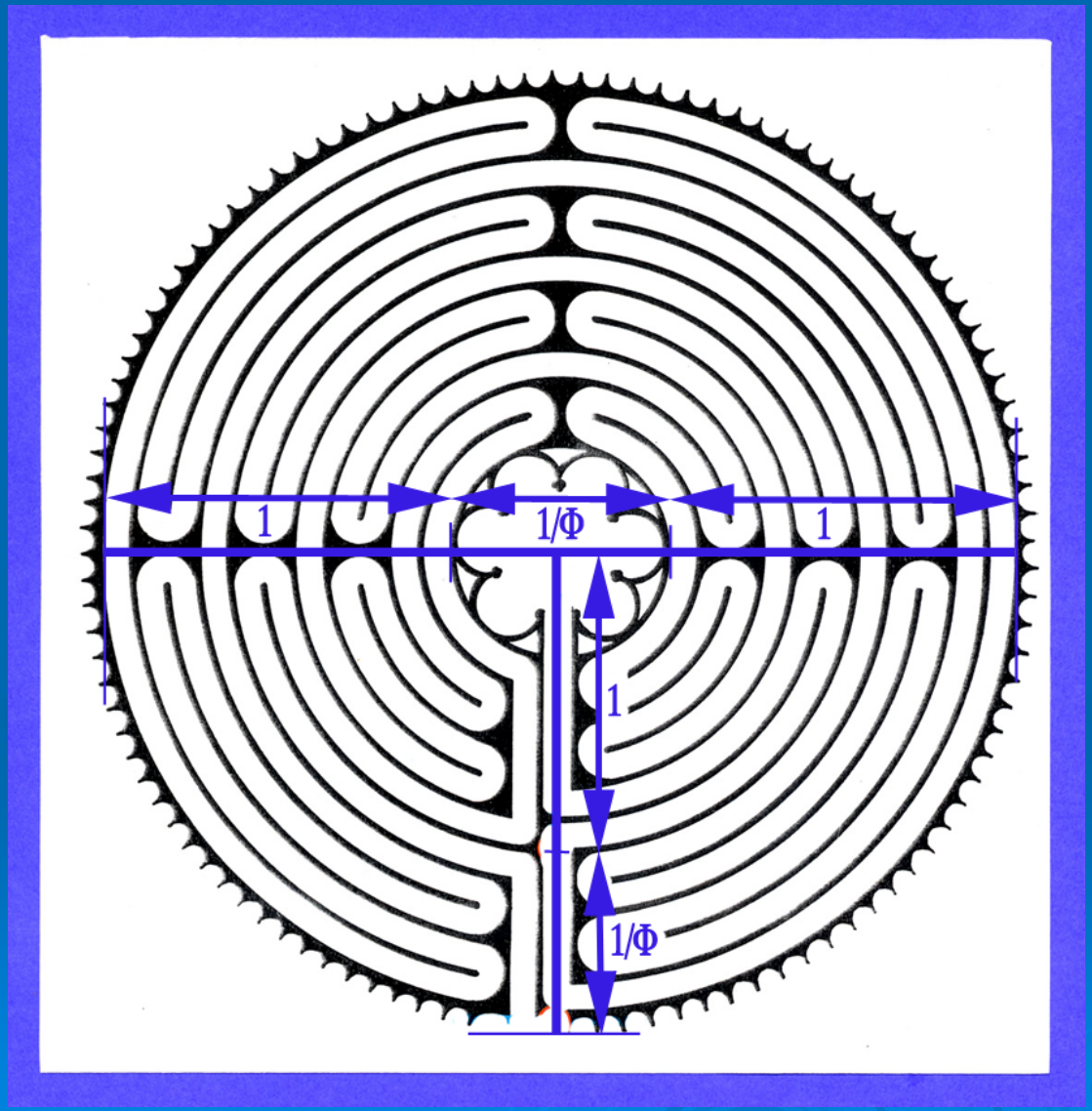
**Number of stones in pathway. "Often quoted as exactly 270 or 272, and considered by many as symbolic of the number of days of human gestation, the exact number is in fact difficult to determine… Several of the original stones have clearly broken since they were originally laid in place and now appear to be two slabs instead of one… Depending on how you count, it is possible to arrive at a number anywhere between around 268 and 274." (Jeff Saward. www.labyrinthos.net)**

**Number of Cusps (Cogs). 112 cusps enclosed within 113 foils. The complete circle would contain 114 of each, if we include the two cusps and one foil omitted to allow entrance to the labyrinth.**

**← The number of individual stones in the Chartres labyrinth is around 270.**

**(Jeff Saward)**

# SG304A.3.11 Chartres Labyrinth & PHI




**Is the Chartres labyrinth incorporating the Golden ratio?**

**Using the geometric layout of the labyrinth, we identified two Golden proportions in the Chartres labyrinth:**

**• Horizontal axis. The diameter of the inner circle (enclosing the flower) is 1/Φ (= .618) with respect to the length "unit 1" (from the inner circle to the inner edge of the *lunulae* (lunations or cogs) circle.**

**• Vertical axis. The distance from the outer edge of the *lunulae* circle to the wall of the 5th path (where the 5th path makes the first turn of 34 turns) is 1/Φ with respect to the distance "unit 1" from the 5th path to the center.**
**(Note: 5 and 34 are Fibonacci numbers).**

# SG304A.3.12 Chartres Labyrinth & Cosmology

**The Chartres Labyrinth embodies the ancient geocentric cosmology:**

(From the center as Earth)

*Rings 1- 7:* the seven "planets":
Sun, Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn

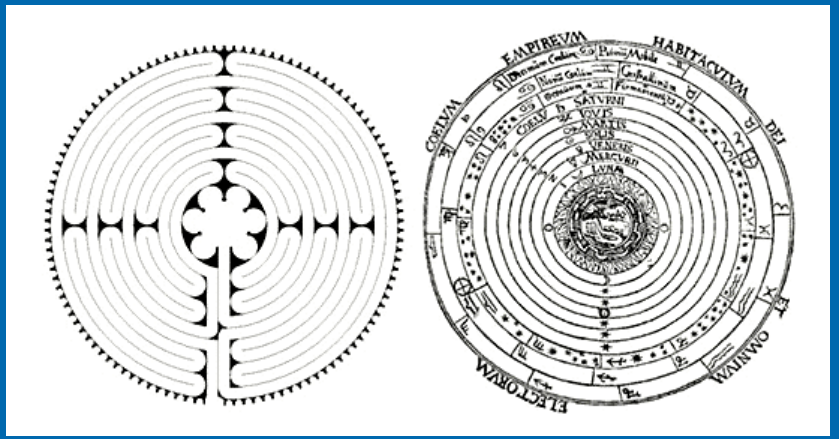
*8th Ring:* the realm of the stars & constellations

*Rings 9 - 11:* The Higher Heavens:
The World Soul, the Spirit Mind and the Supreme Being

Note: each quadrant consists of 28.5 foils and 28 cusps
- a Moon cycles connection.
(There are also 28 U-turns in the journey)

**The Chartres labyrinth is also a template expressing the geocentric cosmology of the medieval times. The labyrinth and Ptolemaic cosmology both have 11 rings:**

- **Rings 1-7: the 7 "planets"**
- **Ring 8: stars & constellations**
- **Rings 9-11: higher heavens**

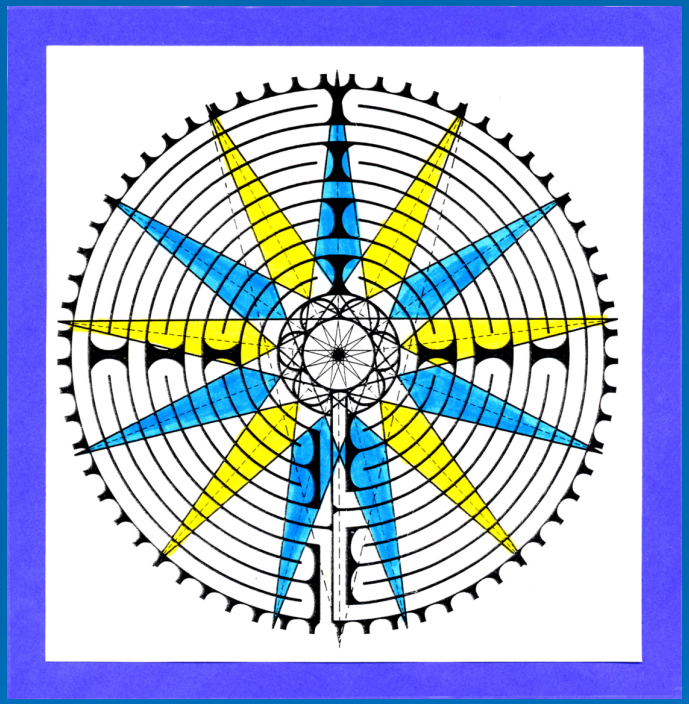



↑ Chartres labyrinth (left) and Ptolemaic cosmos.

↑ "Lapis Sanctuary". 17th c. drawing showing the attribution of the planets to the labyrinth's rings.

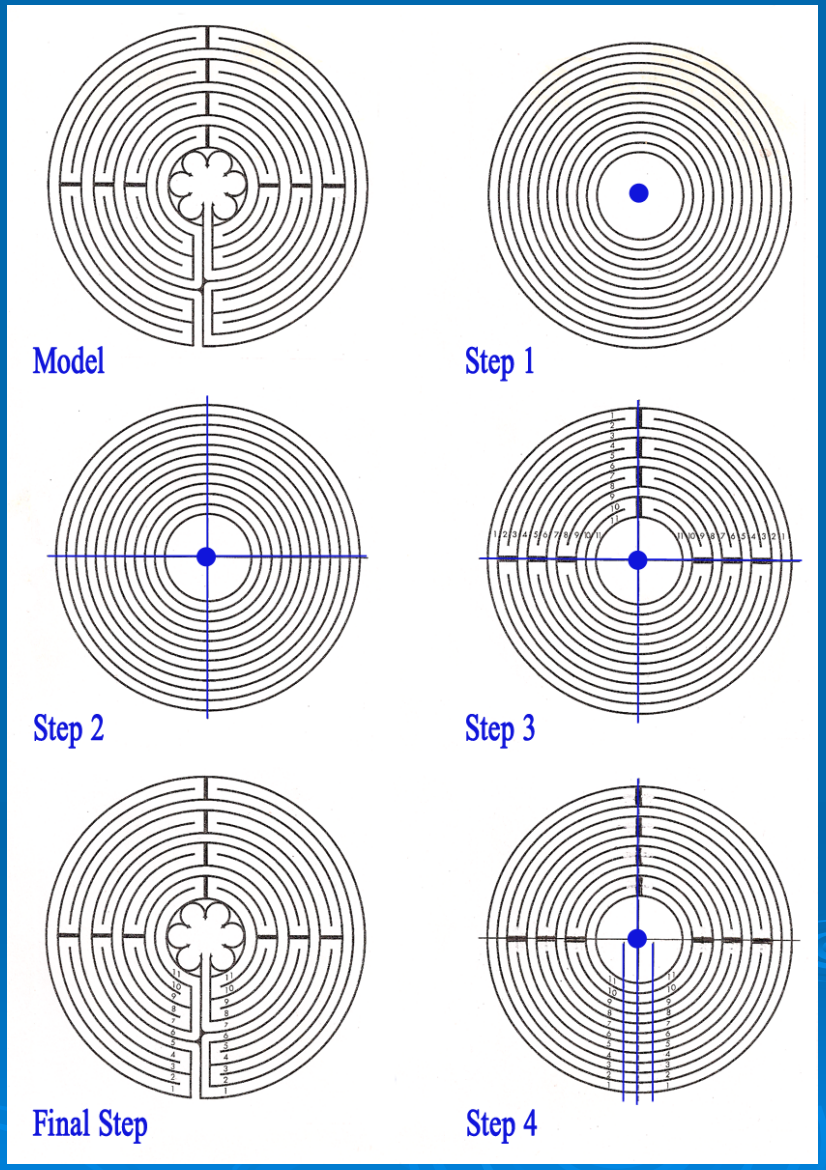
# SG304A.3.13.1 Tracing the Chartres Labyrinth (1)

**🡻 The 13-pointed star overlaid on the Chartres Labyrinth.**
**This is the "hidden pattern" suggested by geomancer Richard Heather Anderson to Lauren Artress when she had difficulty duplicating the Chartres design for the Grace Cathedral. It is a potential glimpse of the inner geometry of the labyrinth.**



**Designing a Chartres Labyrinth (on paper or on the ground) 🡺**

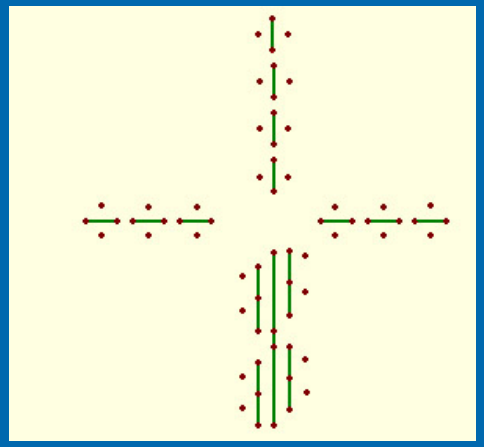
**Step 1: Trace 12 circles (and therefore 11 paths).**
**Step 2: Trace the 4 quadrants with the vertical and horizontal lines.**
**Step 3: Mark the top turn-arounds and erase the corresponding end lines.**
**Step 4: Trace two lines parallel to the center line and adjust the down turn-arounds according to model.**

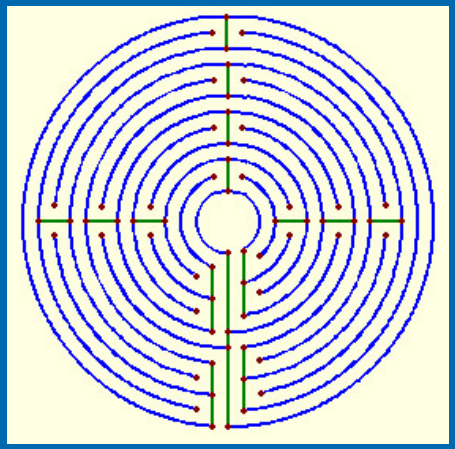



**🡹 Diagrams after Melissa G. West in *Exploring the Labyrinth*. 2000.**

# SG304A.3.13.2 The Chartres Labyrinth (2) Variants

The Madonna Labyrinth, a 9-rings Chartres type. Credit.

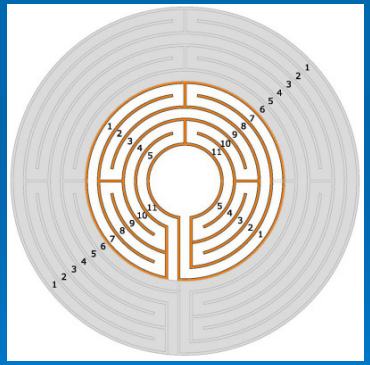




Animation of another way to trace the Chartres labyrinth, based on a cross seed pattern. Left: the cross seed pattern. Right: "Connecting the dots".

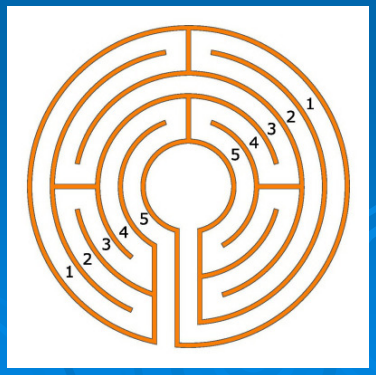
The Chartres labyrinth allows several variations, among others through the reduction of the number of rings.

7-rings Chartres type. Credit

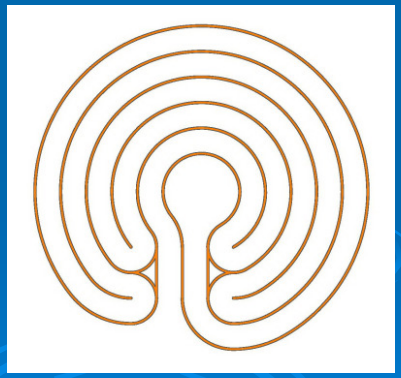


The entire laby with the 5 innermost rings.

Credit




The 5-rings Chartres laby



The 5-rings Knidos laby

# SG304A.3.14 Chartres Labyrinth - Current Re-Opening

↑ The present: walking the Chartres labyrinth as it was intended.

## Walking the Chartres Labyrinth nowadays.

Not long ago permanently covered with chairs, the Chartres Labyrinth has been slowly "liberated" in the last decade, thanks specially to official requests by American labyrinth pioneers like Lauren Artress (Grace Cathedral, San Francisco) and the open-mindedness of clergy officials such as Chanoine Francois Legaux.

Indeed, to the dismay of some narrow-minded clergy, more and more people are attracted to Chartres and its labyrinth because of the power of the built-in sacredness, rather than because of the appeal of the religious rituals.

Depending on fluctuating church policies and paradigm conflicts, the Chartres Labyrinth is now regularly open, be it a day a week or one hour every day.

← The past: sitting in chairs upon the labyrinth - this was not intended by the medieval builders.

(Credit)

↑ The future yet to come: children playing on the labyrinth

# SG304A. Chapter 4. Contemporary Renaissance of Labyrinths

← Grace Cathedral indoor Labyrinth. (Real Simple Magazine, May 2002).

Community labyrinths are now sprouting in all sorts of public places, built and intended to be used by the community. Parks, children playgrounds, plazas, public gardens and promenades, church front- or backyards, healing & retreats centers, intentional communities, schools & universities… all are claiming the words "community use" as the purpose of their labyrinth.
Many new labyrinths resources are appearing: "keys-in-hands" labyrinths, portable labyrinths, finger labyrinths, paver kits, garden templates, floor & plaza labyrinths… and even labyrinths for rent.

# SG304A.4.1.1 The Story of Grace Cathedral (1)

**Lauren Artress (left) was Canon Pastor at Grace Cathedral, San Francisco when she decided to take a seminar with Jean Houston. There Lauren encountered the Labyrinth and was overwhelmed by the inner sense that it was to be part of her life work.**

**She went to Chartres, did a lot of research, presented to the Grace Cathedral staff her project of an indoor Chartres-type labyrinth and eventually a 900 lbs wool tapestry was inaugurated in the Cathedral and has been walked by hundreds of thousand. A variety of uses are offered: yoga practice, candlelight walks, Peace walks…**

**Ever since, Lauren has been "enthusiastically" active organizing a global Labyrinth network: Veriditas, which now exists to "facilitate the transformation of the human spirit through offering the Labyrinth Experience".**

**In 2005, an outdoor labyrinth was added in front of Grace Cathedral.**

***"We're always told what to believe, what to do. We're told. We're told. We're told… The labyrinth evokes our own deep intuitive wisdom about ourselves."* (L. Artress)**

***"The labyrinth is an archetype, a divine imprint, found in all religious traditions in various forms around the world. By walking a replica of the Chartres labyrinth, laid in the floor of Chartres Cathedral in France around 1220, we are rediscovering a long-forgotten mystical tradition. The labyrinth has only one path so there are no tricks to it and no dead ends. The path winds throughout and becomes a mirror for where we are in our lives. It touches our sorrows and releases our joys. Walk it with an open mind and an open heart. There are three stages of the walk:***

- ***Purgation (Releasing) ~ A letting go of the details of your life. This is the act of shedding thoughts and distractions. A time to open the heart and quiet the mind.***
- ***Illumination (Receiving) ~ When you reach the center, stay there as long as you like. It is a place of meditation and prayer. Receive what is there for you to receive.***
- ***Union (Returning) ~ As you leave, following the same path out of the center as you came in, you enter the third stage, which is joining God, your Higher Power, or the healing forces at work in the world. Each time you walk the labyrinth you become more empowered to find and do the work for which you feel your soul is reaching." (www.gracecathedral.org)***

**"Every sacred tradition uses the metaphor of walking a path to find one's spiritual center and to experience the divine, Artress said. To be human is to invoke symbols and metaphors.**
**"You have a meaningful life when you live a symbolic life," Artress said. Moving along a ritual pathway with a set center and no way to get lost, despite the complexities, is an expression of trust in divine order.**
**"A labyrinth takes you out of time," she said. "It is one big pause button."**

**A self-described antsy person, Artress said she was unsuccessful at many forms of meditation, but the labyrinth is a "body prayer" that easily brings her to a contemplative state. (The Denver Post. 1/09/2010)**

***"The Labyrinth was designed by an intelligence we cannot fully understand…***
***It is a field of light, a cosmic dance."* (L. Artress)**

# SG304A.4.1.2 The Story of Grace Cathedral (2)

←↑ The indoor labyrinth is a floor tapestry used as a meditative tool. Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, CA.

(Credit)

↑ The outdoor labyrinth is made of terrazzo stone and is located to the right of the cathedral doors. This labyrinth is open 24 hours daily for walking.

← The indoor labyrinth lines up with the overall architecture of Grace Cathedral.

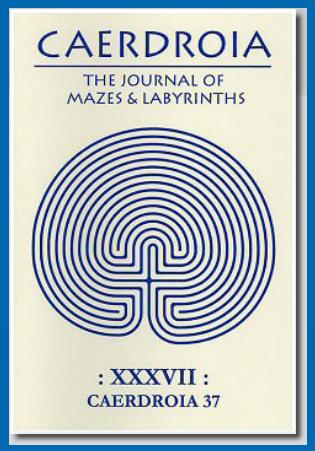
(Credit)

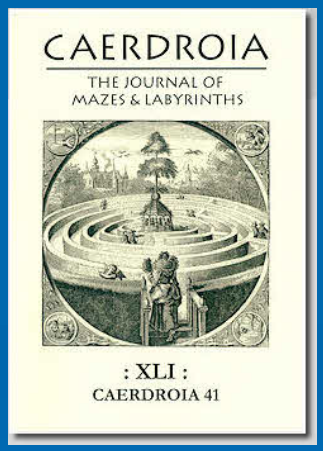
# SG304A.4.2 Labyrinths Facilitators & Resources

**Many wonderful & dedicated labyrinth facilitators have made themselves available to teach the basics of labyrinth making, to guide workshops & seminars and to create the beginnings of a global labyrinth movement: Lauren Artress, Jeff Saward, Robert Ferré, R. Feather Anderson, Sig Lonegren, Helen Curry, Alex Champion… and many more…**

**Groups & resources like Caerdroia, Mid-Atlantic Geomancy, The Labyrinth Society, Earth Symbols, Paxworks, the Labyrinth Company, St Louis Labyrinth Project, Veriditas… are offering information, labyrinths of all kinds and teaching tools… www.labyrinthos,net is the labyrinth *master website* created by Jeff Saward.**

**Veriditas is maintaining a *Global Labyrinth Locator* to find out the nearest labyrinth in the neighborhood.**
**The World Labyrinth Day is celebrated the first Saturday of May.**




***Caerdroia* is the reference journal for the study of mazes and labyrinths. "Founded in 1980 by Jeff Saward, and published annually, the journal acts as a forum for historical and theoretical research, the publication of archive material and as a monitor of current developments with the field. Each edition contains illustrated papers, notes, news and views on the latest discoveries, theories and ideas from researchers and enthusiasts worldwide, exchanging information to help create a clearer picture of the origins and distribution of the labyrinth symbol and its descendants, from the earliest rock carvings and artifacts through to modern puzzle mazes of ever increasing complexity and ingenuity."**

## The Veriditas Labyrinth Facilitator Training

**"The goal of the Training is to prepare people to introduce others to the labyrinth in an articulate, professional and effective way. The training addresses both meditative walking and ceremonial use. It is focused primarily on the 11- Circuit Medieval Labyrinth but is inclusive of all forms. Walking the labyrinth is being embraced as a spiritual practice throughout the Western world mostly because of Veriditas trained facilitators. The Veriditas Facilitator Training -- which began in 1997 -- remains the most rigorous and comprehensive training offered. Some people take this two-day course to deepen their knowledge of labyrinths. Others take it with the goal of becoming a Veriditas Certified Labyrinth Facilitator.**

**To date, Veriditas has trained more than 2,500 labyrinth facilitators -- therapists, clergy, hospital administrators, parish teams, doctors, artists and labyrinth enthusiasts -- who are introducing the labyrinth to their communities. About 1,000 people are certified.**

**Why Become a Trained Facilitator? Our experience has taught us that if a person does not have a satisfying first experience, they do not easily return to walk again. Over the years a body of knowledge about labyrinths, their history and how to use them effectively has developed. The labyrinth seems deceptively easy to introduce to others. However, common mistakes have begun to appear: presenting a 'right way' to walk a labyrinth or interrupting someone's experience due to the presenter's discomfort with emotion are just two examples. Benefiting from Lauren Artress' extensive experience and knowledge, the Training teaches how to use these powerful archetypal patterns as blue prints for transformation."**

# SG304A.4.3.1 Contemporary Church Labyrinths (1)

*Chartres Replica™ Labyrinth; St. John's Lutheran Church, West Seneca, New York*

*St. Paul™ Cork Tile Labyrinth; Brown Memorial Presbyterian Church, Baltimore, Maryland*

*Chartres Cathedral Labyrinth; First Christian Church, Albany, Texas*

**← St. Lawrence Catholic Church, Minneapolis, MN. "Vision Quest à la Chartres" paver plaza with 28' 11" diameter design. This installation won a national masonry design award in 2003.**

(Credit all images)

**↑ Paver Labyrinth. First Christian Church, Beaumont, TX.**

**↑ Benedictine Pastoral Center, Bristow, VA. Paver plaza with 38' 4.25" diameter Chartres-type labyrinth. Made out of 90,000 pavers.**

# SG304A.4.3.2 Contemporary Church Labyrinths (2)

← Abbey church of Our Lady of Saint-Remy, Belgium.

Community Church of the Monterey Peninsula. (Credit).

↑→ Maryland. Prebysterian Church. Brick on mulch.

Credit.

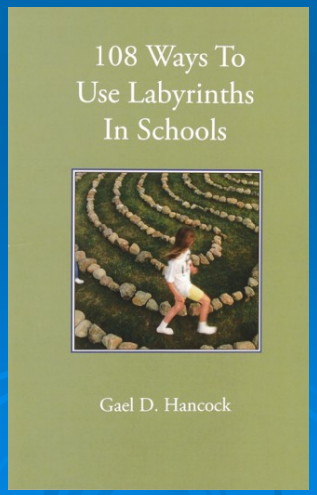
↑ St Emmanuel's Episcopal Church in Eastsound. Credit.

# SG304A.4.4 School Labyrinths

**Labyrinths can be successfully used as playgrounds that double up as educational tools and become part of the collective group mind of the students and the teachers. The theme of the labyrinth with its different sizes and type and various methods of construction can also be integrated into the school's overall curriculum, in terms of hands-on activities and class projects.**
**Learning through movement is termed "Educational Kinesiology".**

**↑ Elementary School, Plano, Illinois. Each person painted a brick and laid it in place to form the walls of the labyrinth pattern. (J. Saward. *Magical Paths.)***

**← Play Labyrinth in Austria. (J. Saward. *Magical Paths.)***



**↑ The labyrinth at Woodheys Primary School, Cheshire. Credit**

# SG304A.4.5.1 University Labyrinths (1)

↑ Created by dowser & geomancer Marty Cain, the Harvard Labyrinth was inaugurated in 1996. Note the new landscape harmony brought by the matriarchal curve lines re-balancing the austere angular architecture of Harvard.

← Chartres-type labyrinth pavement at the University of Philadelphia.

Credit

↑ University of Miami. Florida Keys Arboretum. 29' 7.25" "Vision Quest à la Chartres" paver plaza. Credit

↑ University of Mississipi. Oxford. Tri-Delta Sorority Plaza. Credit

# SG304A.4.5.2 University Labyrinths (2)

↑ Cut into the slopes below the University of Kent at Canterbury and overlooking Canterbury Cathedral, this labyrinth enjoys a unique setting.
This original 7-circuit design in the medieval four fold style has topological symmetry (each section walked in the first half is mirrored in the second half).
The use of grass is in keeping with the English tradition of turf labyrinths which were literally cut into the ground, however the conventional format is reversed with the grass forming the walls. The path is formed by three courses of natural stones.

The Kent University labyrinth is the first labyrinth to be built at an English university, and perhaps the first in the world to be built as a teaching and learning resource across academic disciplines.

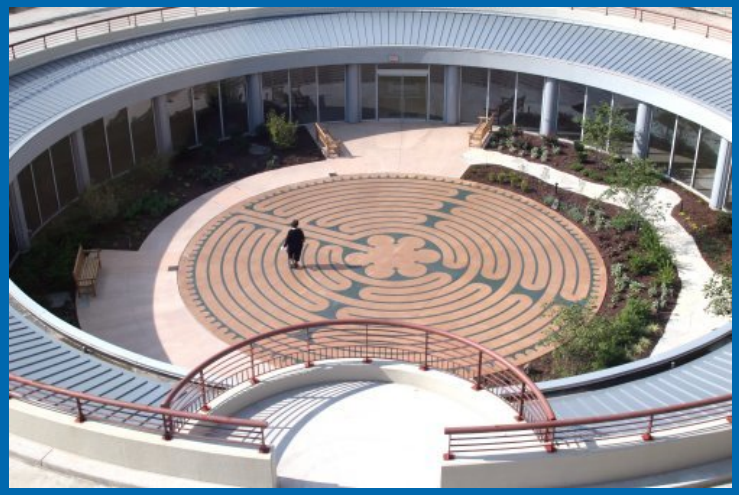
Building the stone pathway ➔ for the Canterbury labyrinth.

↑ Boston College labyrinth. Wikimedia.

***Solvitur Ambulando*... it is solved by walking.**

← Kent university's labyrinth.

# SG304A.4.6 Labyrinths at Healing Centers



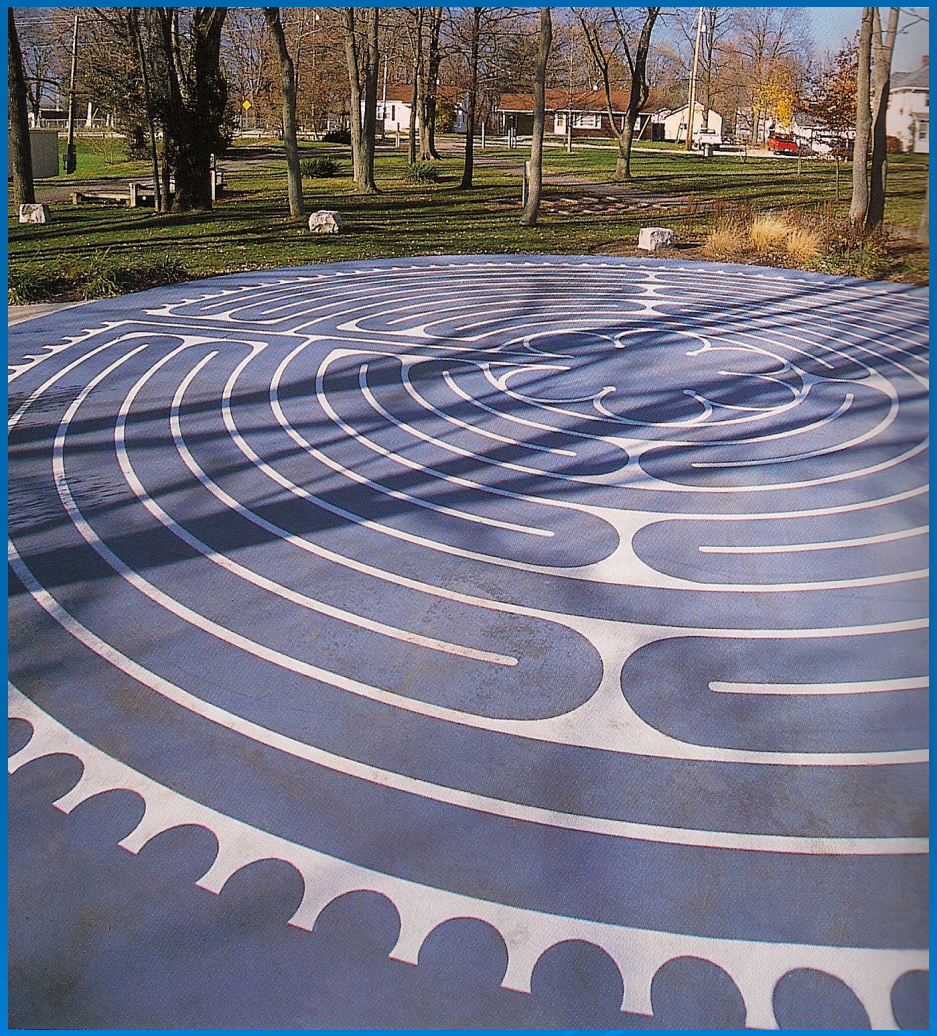
↑ Labyrinth at Marianjoy Rehabilitation Hospital in Wheaton, Illinois. Credit

↑ Double "Avalon" labyrinths at the Sentara Virginia Beach Hospital. Credit.

↑ At the Tofte Manor Retreat Center, in England, a copper pipe, buried beneath the grass paths, carries water to the centre of the labyrinth before spiraling over a large quartz crystal. It then returns to a tap from which labyrinth walkers may drink the water energized by the sacred patterning of the labyrinth.

↑ Brick labyrinth at the Maitreya Center, Bangalore, India.

# SG304A.4.7 Labyrinths in Public Parks



↑ Greencastle Park. Photo: Jeff Saward. Credit.

Classical labyrinth → outside the Bishop Lucey Park, Cork, Ireland. Part of the "Labyrinth Week 2005". (Credit).

↑ Bristol (Victoria Park) water labyrinth. The pathway is a channel of water from the spring that supplied St Mary's Conduit, an old water supply of Bristol. Water wells up at the centre and flows along every part of its 11 rings. A twig or leaf is then slowly floated along the entire length. This is a Chartres-type laby. (Credit).

↑ Lake Erie Arboretum's labyrinth. (Wikipedia).

# SG304A.4.8.1 Community Labyrinths (1)

**Community labyrinths are now sprouting in all sorts of public places, built and intended to be used by the community. Parks, kids playgrounds, market plazas, gardens and promenades, church outdoors, healing & retreats centers, intentional communities, schools & universities… all are flagging "community use" as the purpose and attract of their labyrinth.**

**Indeed, labyrinths have the built-in, universal, non-denominational appeal of a common ground where every member of a community, regardless of their beliefs, age or occupation, can meet, discover and respect each other. The labyrinth draws upon the vortex power of the Sacred Circle/Spiral to impress on every user a deep sense of the mystery of the Center. It also connect simultaneous users in a deambulatory dance much more meaningful than "walking down to the shopping the mall".**

**It is a great sign of community awakening to witness so many labyrinths consciously built and dedicated to community use. It is a "return forward" to the true community use of the great cathedral labyrinths in the medieval times.**

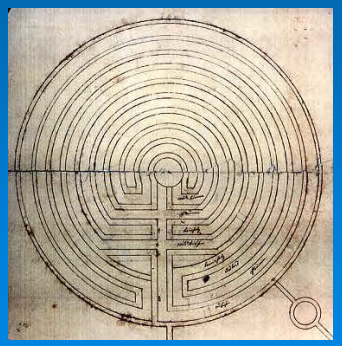
**↑ "Earth Wisdom" Labyrinth.**
**Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Illinois.**
**(Picture: R. Ferre in H. Kern. Through the Labyrinth.)**

# SG304A.4.8.2 Community Labyrinths (2) New Harmony

The Harmony Society was a Christian-based utopian community founded by George Rapp in Germany (1785). Due to religious persecution, the "Harmonists" moved to the United States in 1805.

In each of the three towns they built ("Harmony", Pennsylvania 1805-1815; "New Harmony", Indiana 1815-1825; and "Economy", Pennsylvania 1825-1905), the Harmonists constructed a labyrinth. The labyrinth was an important symbol because it represented, in physical form, the spiritual beliefs that were the basis of their entire commune. In the tradition of the medieval monastery gardens reflecting and anticipating Paradise, the Harmonists saw their gardens as symbolic of the celestial Paradise. The labyrinth, as central part of the garden, was used as a symbol and archetype of accessing Paradise.

There are three distinct architectural drawings of their labyrinths in the Harmony Society archives.



←↑→ There are three distinct architectural drawings of their Labyrinths in the Harmony Society archives.

Credit:
www.labyrinthos.net
(Caerdroia 32 -2001)

↑ Fountain at the "New Harmony" labyrinth, for barefoot walkers.

↑↓ "New Harmony", Indiana has two labyrinths.

The recent "Cathedral Labyrinth" ↑ is outdoors and duplicates the original labyrinth at Chartres Cathedral. Constructed of polished granite, it is located in a park made specifically for the labyrinth, imitating the dimensions of the nave of Chartres Cathedral. It was dedicated in October of 1998, by the then Rector of the Chartres Cathedral, Chanoine Francois Legaux.

(Credit: Jeff Saward)

↑ → The other labyrinth, the Harmonist hedge Labyrinth, was originally built around 1815 and reconstructed in 1939.

# SG304A.4.8.3 Community Labyrinths (3)

↑ The Labyrinth Community Network, in Toronto, spearheaded the creation of the Toronto Public Labyrinth at Trinity Square Park which officially opened September 14, 2005. LCN worked in collaboration with the City of Toronto and The Church of the Holy Trinity on this labyrinth.

← The Chico, CA, Community Labyrinth Project (CCLP) is a local non-profit that received city approval to build a permanent, centrally-located labyrinth for the Chico community at Children's Park, near downtown Chico.

↓ Dedication of the Chico labyrinth.

← Gate to the Parkrose community labyrinth.

Credit.

←↑ In Boulder, CO, the Grillo Health Information Center offers a permanent outdoor labyrinth just west of the main branch of the Boulder Public Library and south of Boulder Creek. This contemporary labyrinth is an interactive public art form designed by artists George Peters and Melanie Walker of Airworks, Inc. The labyrinth has become a defining design in the park area, using natural materials to create two intersecting paths.

# SG304A.4.9 New Labyrinth Media

Labyrinths are making an appearance in all sorts of new media: from refrigerator magnets to laser-cut wooden floor & roll-on carpet, stain-glass, spray-on stencils and masks, do-it-yourself kits… Labyrinths can now be bought, rented, borrowed, projected… or walked upon as room carpet. The design is out and delivers its impact in original and unexpected ways and places.

↑ Glass Goddess window labyrinth in Sig and Karin's home in Glastonbury.

↑ Labyrinth pendant. Credit.

↑ Labyrinth earrings. Credit.

↑ St. Paul's labyrinth design (1996) was built using pre-cut arcs and geometric sections of Tennessee Bluestone and Indiana Limestone. Pre-cut with abrasive waterjet, the sections were palletized and delivered to the site.

← Outdoors Stone Labyrinths can now be assembled upon precisely printed & durable weed-blocking landscape fabric.

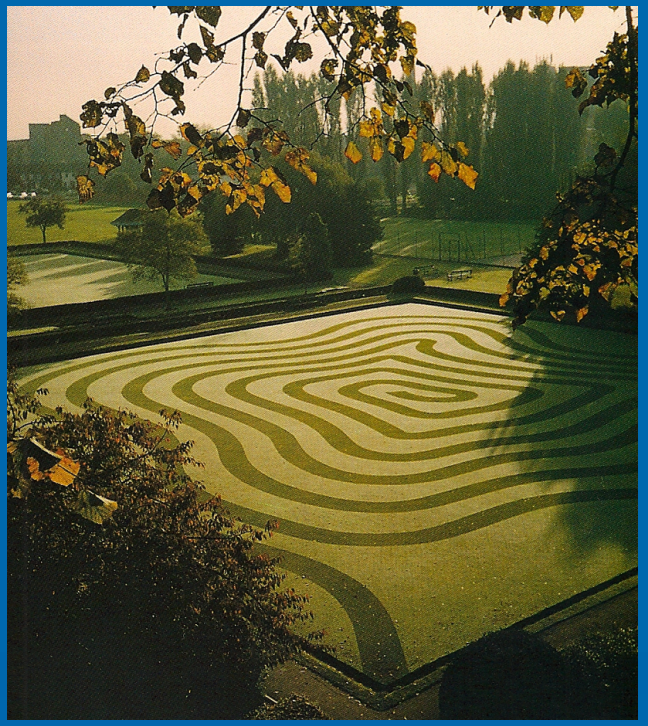
↑ Lap-top finger labyrinths.

↓ Labyrinths as home carpets. (Credit)

Credit →

# SG304A.4.10.1 Ephemeral Labyrinths (1)

↑ Meditating in a beach labyrinth. (www.labyrinthireland.com)



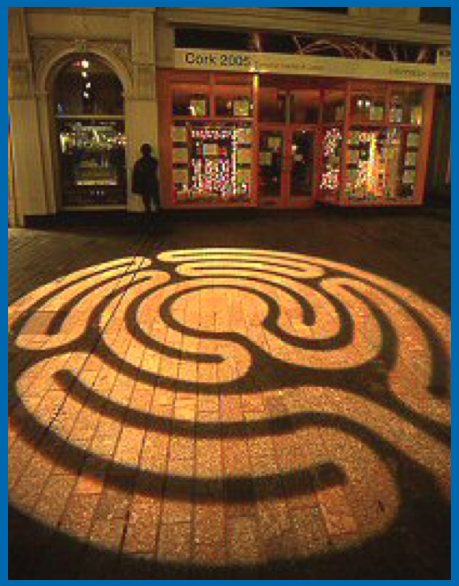
← Rock Labyrinth. Mile Rock Beach. San Francisco, California. (dipity.com)

Laby → at Seabright beach. (Credit).

↑ Chris parsons' "dew laby". Within a few hours, the sun evaporates these creations. (Jeff Saward. Magical Paths).

# SG304A.4.10.2 Ephemeral Labyrinths (2)

↑ Erwin Reissman has created snow labyrinths. As he explains in his blog, one can only trace labyrinths by leaving tracks in the shape of "Ariadne's Thread".




↑ Light labyrinth projected onto the main street. Cork, Ireland. Labyrinth Week, 2005. (Image: www.labyrinthos.net)

↑ Snow labyrinth in the Swiss Alps.

Labyrinth of snow & ice.
//zeedesigns.com

↑ A sand labyrinth in the island of Gavdos, Crete. (Credit)

← The Ariadne's Tread design marked by the foot tracks.

# SG304A.4.11.1 Canvas Labyrinths (1)

↑ The 35 feet Chartres-type canvas labyrinth offered by Veriditas comes in 3 parts connected by velcro.

Credit

Credit

↑ Walking a modified medieval canvas labyrinth.

↓ Baltic Wheel canvas labyrinth offered by Veriditas. Note the entrance icon: it looks like a tree, but also is abstract enough to be interpreted as a person.

← Reims 36' poly canvas model in use at a Youth Festival.
www.labyrinthcompany.com

# SG304A.4.11.1 Canvas Labyrinths (2) Chartres Family

← At Paxworks, the Chartres-type labyrinths on canvas form an entire new family with Daddy, Mummy, Boy and Girl…

↑ "Renewal" canvas laby. (Credit)

RENEWAL •
8-circuit / 24 feet.
Chartres-type labyrinth designed for versatility with mid-size groups and ceremonies.

↑ "Eagles Crest" canvas laby.

↑"Trinity" canvas laby.

EAGLES CREST •
5-circuit / 18 feet.
Chartres-type labyrinth designed for portability and smaller spaces.

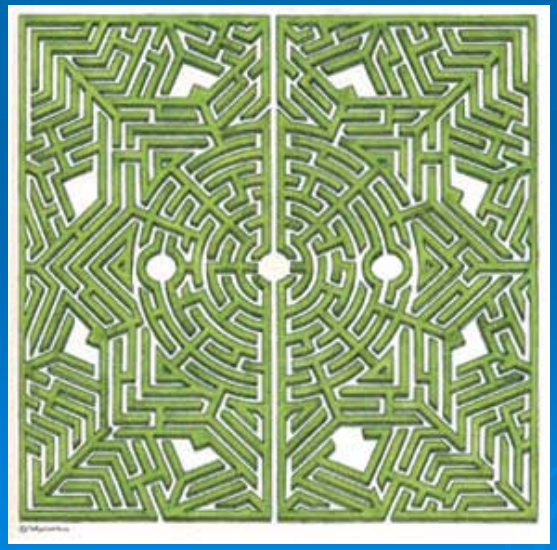
TRINITY •
3 circuits / 12 feet.
Chartres type labyrinth designed for ceremonial and personal uses.

← "Blue Lotus".

Another Chartres-type labyrinth custom designed by Paxworks.

# SG304A.4.12.1 Labyrinth Disneylands (1)

Since 1996, the on-going Labyrinthus parks project in France has created large-size maze/labyrinth entertainment events in corn fields. Mythological and historical themes are enacted by theater groups, musicians and actors for the entertainment of large summer vacation crowds.



← Labyrinthus 2007. Alsace, France.

Credit.

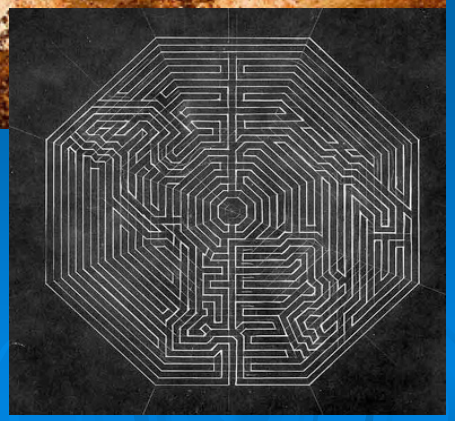
↑ Aerial view of Labyrinthus 1997.

# SG304A.4.12.2 Labyrinths Disneylands (2)

… A cross between labyrinth, maze and crop-circle …

↑ Labyrinthus 1999. Credit.

↑ Labyrinthus 2010. Alsace, France. Credit.



# SG304A.4.13
# Advertising Labyrinths

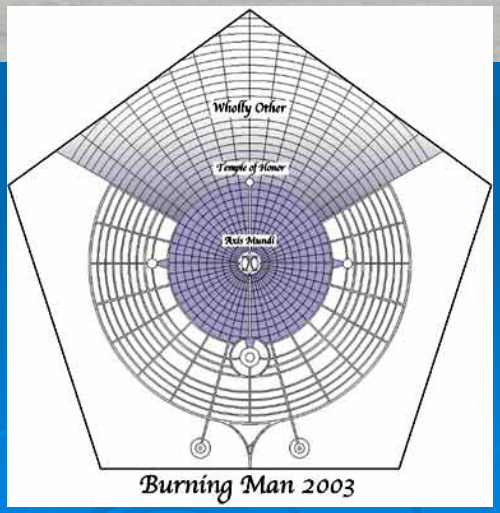
**A graphic artist from Mexico City, G. M. Meave, has created an entire advertising campaign for a well known corporate brand, all based on the labyrinth concept in various renditions.**

**Says Meave on his website www.meave.org: *"For those curious enough, it's worth mentioning that these labyrinths are real. This means they were designed as architectonic blueprints before being executed as artworks. Their walls, entrances and exits were established according to labyrinth rules, as well as some special tricks here and there."***

**(Note: the brand name has been cropped on the images)**

# SG304A.4.14 Burning Man Labyrinths

Credit



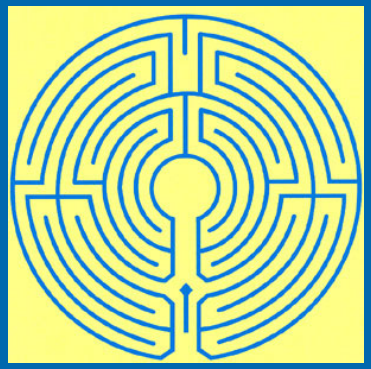

The "city map" for Burning Man 2003

Aerial view of the city geometry.

# SG304A.4.15.1 New Labyrinth Shapes (1)

The 7-circuit *Santa Rosa Labyrinth* (Lea Goode-Harris, 1997) is divided into four quadrants and includes a unique space on the fourth circuit inline with the labyrinth's mouth. ➔ Called the "heart space" this area is not walked but serves as a sacred vessel for holding symbols of one's issues, needs or celebrations. This "heart space" is approached from all four directions, allowing the walker to view his/her symbols from various points of view.

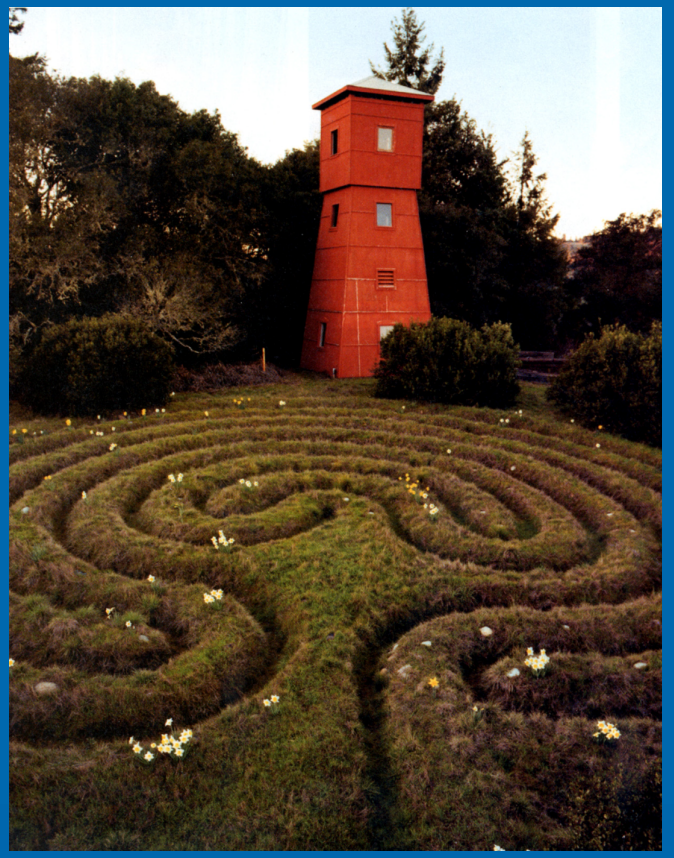
(Credit) ➔



← Created by Marty & Debi Kermeen as a new design for the new millennium, the 9-circuit, dual-path *Reflection Labyrinth* is intended for healing and wholeness in relationships.

(Credit)

labyrinths.org



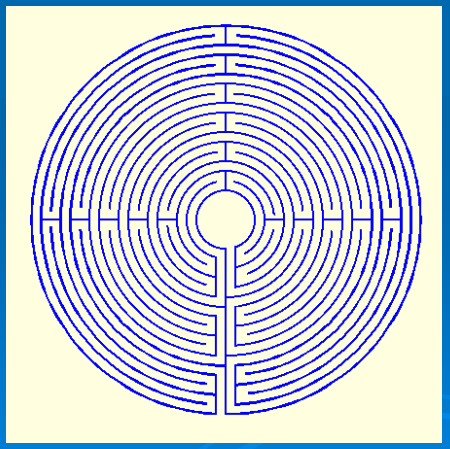
↑ In Mendocino, California, Alex Champion has created five labyrinths on ten acres.
Alex is part of the Art Line Project, a group of artists who are building a series of labyrinths, one every 100 miles, across the United States along the same latitude .

← The *Gossembrot labyrinth* has 7 circuits with its turns based on a five pointed star and doubled or four paths deep.
The original drawing is in a manuscript by Sigmund Gossembrot the Elder of Augsburg, ca. 1480. (Credit)

# SG304A.4.15.2 New Labyrinth Shapes (2)

↑ Academy of Boldern, Switzerland. (H. Kern).

↑ This dual "Heart Labyrinth" has 2 paths, both leading to the center and linking to the other path to return to the entrance. (www.labyrinthos.net)



"Super-Chartres", a 17-rings labyrinth. (Credit).

↑ Custom designed labyrinth by Paxworks.

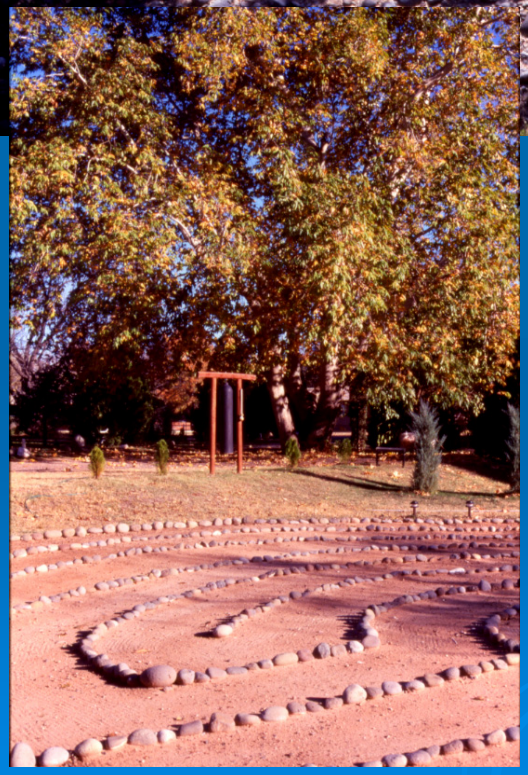
↑ → This complex labyrinth was "mowed" in a New Zealand farm. It offered 2.2 kilometers of path walking.
www.martin-rusholme.co.nz

← Chislehurst Church in England opted for an unusual design, taken from a water labyrinth in the Qasr al-Azm palace in Damascus, Syria (dated c. 1750).
In common with the original, this labyrinth features separate paths for the inward and outward journeys.
The church's replica also has enlarged spaces between each turn to allow for prayer stations.

www.earthsymbols.com

# SG304A.4.16.1 Sedona Labyrinths (1)

***"L'Overture"*** **in Beaver Creek. Sedona, AZ.**
**Installed by Evelyne Horelle in 2001. Taken out by new owners.**



# SG304A.4.16.2 Sedona Labyrinths (2)

↑ The 60 ft. 7-rings labyrinth co-created
by Gardens for Humanity & the StarWheel Foundation in 1998.
Located at the Lodge at Sedona.
Built with "Goddess stones" (water-rounded stones from a dry creek).
Each stone was ceremonially invited to come and bless this labyrinth.
This was the first of many more labyrinths in Sedona.

# SG304A.4.16.3 Sedona Labyrinths (3)

↓→ Chartres-type labyrinth (11 rings).

Angel Valley Retreat Center. Sedona, AZ.

↑ 9-rings labyrinth. Designed by Aya. The Sanctuary Retreat Center. Cornville, Arizona.

← Chartres-type Goddess labyrinth. Designed by Aya. Mago Ranch, VOC, Sedona.

# SG304A.4.17.1 The StarWheel Labyrinth (1)

StarWheel mandala # 61. “Labrys-13”. By Aya

# SG304A.4.17.2 The StarWheel Labyrinth (2)

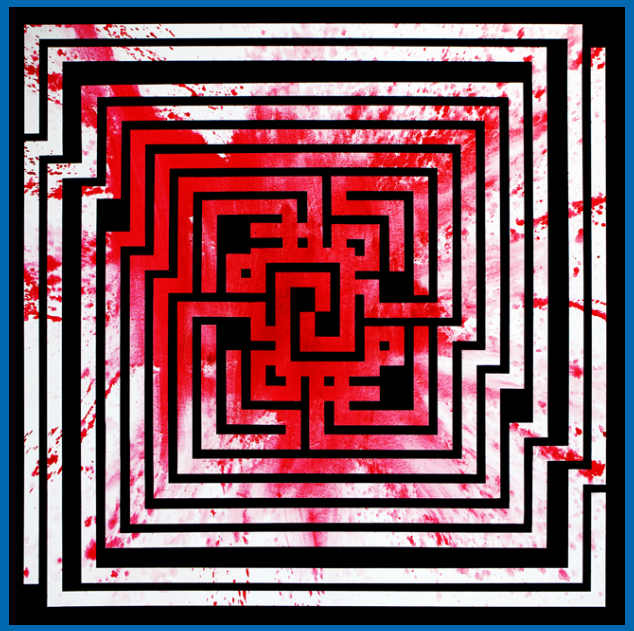
**"A thirteen-ring Cross-Labyrinth, the sacred path of Pilgrimage.**
**Questing for the Inner Treasure.**
**The traveler's staff is topped by a labrys, the twin ax symbolizing our dual nature.**
**Many pilgrims are lining up in front of the entrance:**
**only one - the Real You - will successfully cross the threshold,**
**in perfect alignment with the Pathway of Light, the Cosmic Axis of the spinal column.**
**On either side of the center labyrinth, you zoom in on many colorful encounters**
**as you enter your inner journey and start meandering through life's experiences.**
**Upon the way, one has a choice:**
**to identify with the passing objects of ego-gratification or to focus upon Realizing the Totality.**

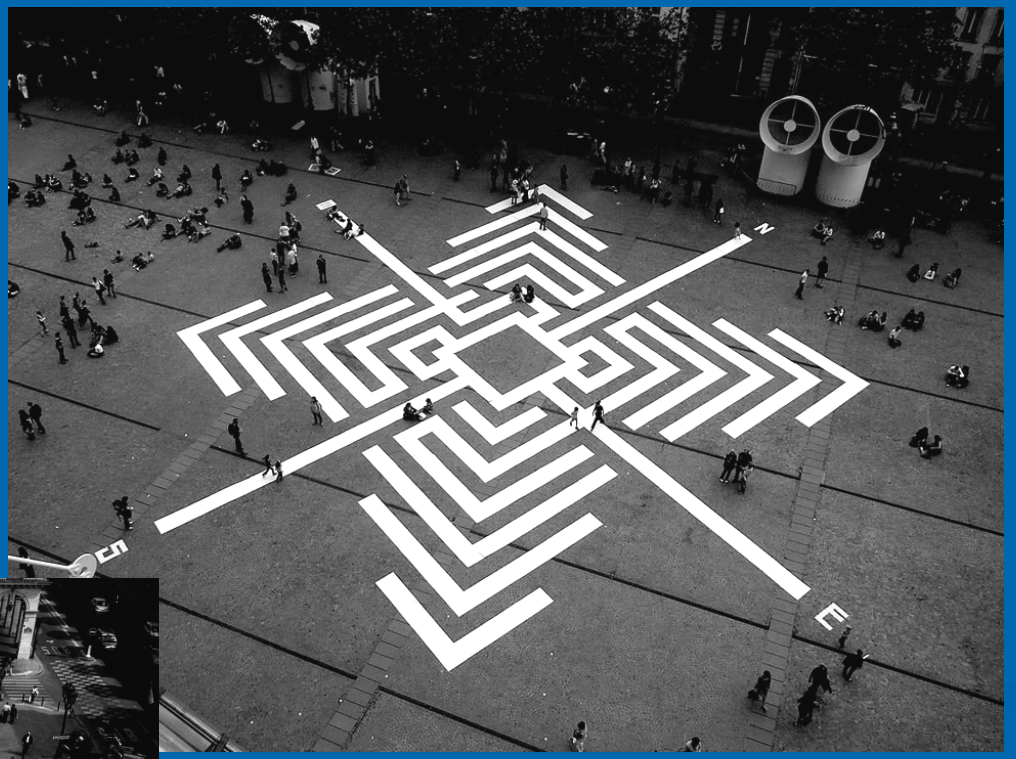
**This is an invitation to walk again the Sacred Labyrinth,**
**this wondrous adventure from the outer edges of awareness**
**into the sanctuary of your own Holy Land: the Self."**

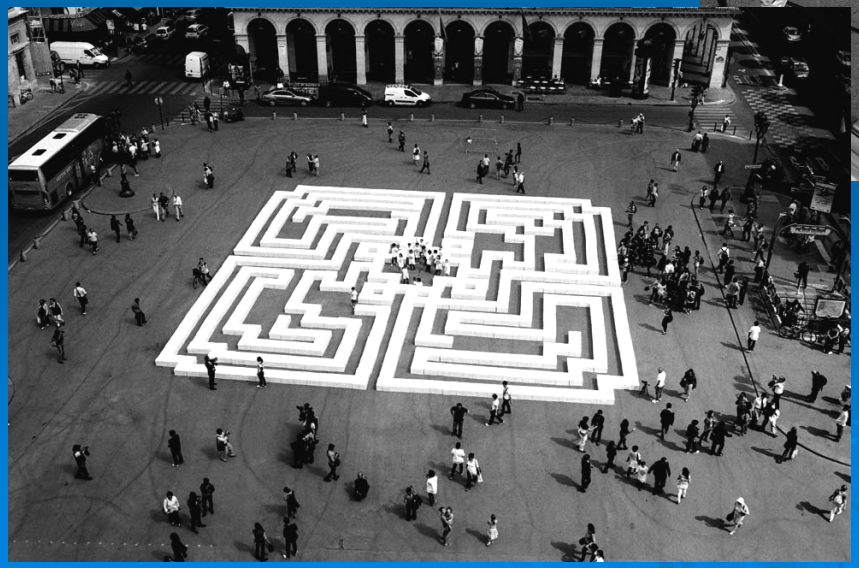


(www.starwheels.com)

## SG304A4.18. Labyrinth-like Contemporary Art





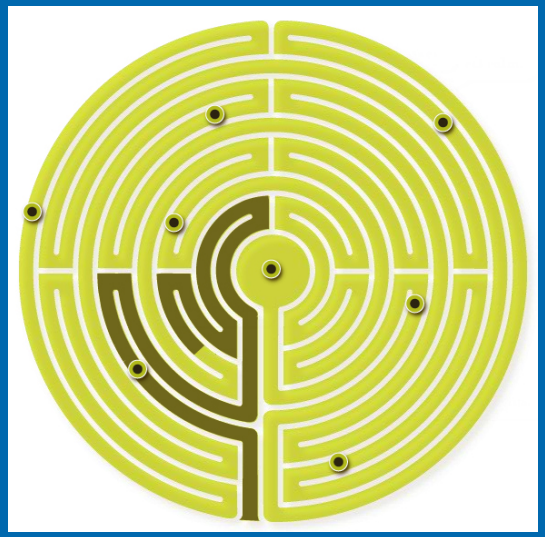


All art work by French designer L'Atlas.

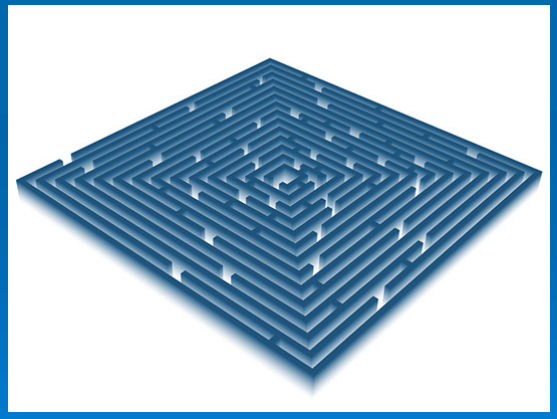
//latlas.net

# SG304A4.19 Digital Labyrinths

**Labyrinths have found their way in a plethora of labyrinth digital games. The confusion labyrinth-maze is prevalent and exploited commercially. But there are some interesting unicursal labyrinth graphics & animations.**



**Mouse-Walking the Chartres labyrinth, on the website of Dr. Andrew Weil.**
**www.weilbeing.com/labyrinth/**



**3D vector labyrinth by Christina Rivera.**

**Tutorial here.**

**Daedalus is a drawing program to create labyrinths (and mazes).**
**It allows for walk-throughs in perspective, aerial view and 3D.**
**www.astrolog.org/labyrnth/daedalus.htm**

**The "Finger Labyrinth" app was developed by Alexander Software Development for the iPhone and iPad.**

**Credit: www.palmyria.co.uk**

**Virtual Labyrinth walks are available from the Labyrinth Company. "You are the Yin-Yang".**

# SG304A. Chapter 5. The Healing Ways of Labyrinths

# SG304A.5.1 Stepping Into the Labyrinth

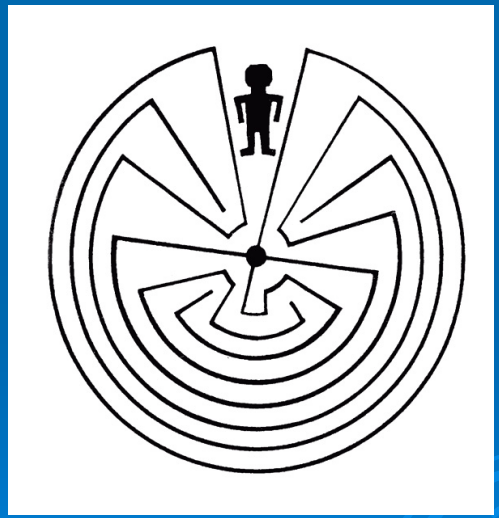
In fact, existence itself is a gigantic labyrinth, a river of consciousness meandering in what at first look like confusing turns, due to our shortsightedness. But, eventually, as we gain the higher perspective of spirit view on our human journey, we realize that this river of life is leading to the vast ocean of universal consciousness. The labyrinth is a fit metaphor and map as it cannot mislead being a one-way path from the periphery of consciousness to the center.

Once the Labyrinth comes into your life, you have got to walk it:

- with your gaze,
- with a finger,
- with your feet,
- with your whole being…

Medieval labyrinths used to be walked in place of the actual pilgrimage to Jerusalem. It was a holy journey of the soul.

Likewise, if you enter the labyrinth as a spirit vision quest, with the full dedication of a pilgrim, the old "you" will be left behind and whole new levels of intuition, guidance and understanding will open up.



← Entering the Labyrinth of Life. Pima basket design.

*The labyrinth is a Sacred space of pilgrimage that will call on you until you enter it and let it guide you.*

# SG304A.5.2 The Labyrinth as Wholistic Initiation

Following the connection between the labyrinth and the cycle of the planet Mercury, we can draw some correspondences between Mercury / Hermes / Thoth and the special, magical, initiatic functions of the labyrinth design. Just like Egyptian Thoth was the guardian of the Underworld, the labyrinth is a ritual of initiation into a higher dimension of consciousness.

Initiation means experiencing death of the human form/persona/ego and being born anew as a consciousness transcending time/space. The labyrinth's path (Ariadne's Thread) is the silver cord leading to a higher dimension, after returning to the womb and winding through the circumvolutions of the astral realms or underworld. It is pertinent that in India, labyrinths are used to ease childbirth and that, for the Hopi, labyrinths signify birth and reincarnation.

The path into the labyrinth is widely understood as a return to Mother Earth, a navigation of the bowels of the underworld. The shape and traditions of the labyrinth point to this association with the winding loops of the entrails (and the winding loops of the brain).

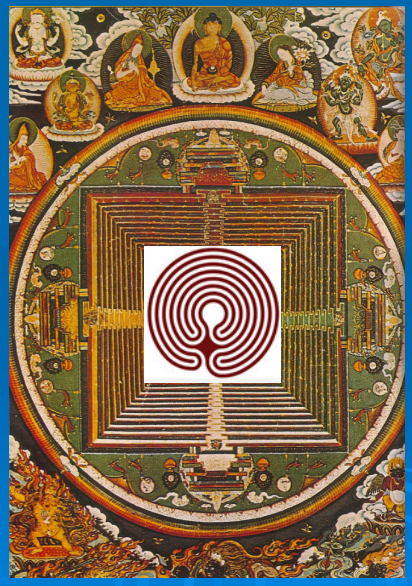
*

As a unicursal path, the labyrinth both creates and protects the centre. Entry is seen as initiation, a step on the path of knowledge that is both concealed and revealed by the labyrinth. When we enter the path of a labyrinth, we are partaking in an ancient ritual of initiation, we are *orienting ourselves* within the larger, wholistic map of life and consciousness.

The Labyrinth is a cosmic orientation figure, a device to determine one's location in space-time and beyond in the universe of spirit: it always point to Source. The Labyrinth is a cosmological technology: it provides a process of moving from a limited worldview (the mindset of the square) to a larger, more wholistic worldview (the awareness of the circle / sphere / vortex). In terms of Sacred Geometry, the Labyrinth is a functional proof of "Squaring the Circle" or rather "Circling the Square". Indeed, one starts with a square "seed pattern" (the cross and "L" quadrants) and eventually come up with a circular / spherical / vortical figure.

Traditionally, unifying the Square (material manifestation) and the circle (the subtle realms of Spirit) within oneself is the goal of the true alchemist or mystic. The Labyrinth is a material, body-size, symbolic expression of that Union. In that sense, the labyrinth is a Holy Wedding or Cosmic Hierogamy, the life-engendering union of Father Sky and Mother Earth. According to Nordic May customs, the union of a couple in a recently sowed field was auspicious for the rebirth of nature; thus was the underlying concept of Nordic "Troy Towns" or Maiden Dances.

↑ At the Center, one encompasses the Whole.



← The labyrinth is a mandala, a map from the rough cube of 3D to the smooth sphere of spirit.

# SG304A.5.3 Labyrinths as Self-Integration

**A Labyrinth contains non-verbal, implicate geometric & numerological designs that create a multi-dimensional holographic field experience. These unseen Sacred Geometry patterns link up the Labyrinth with a larger cosmic order where the world of material forms interfaces with the subtler realms of Spirit.**

**The Labyrinth experience is a potent practice of Self-Integration as it encapsulates the *spiraling journey in & out of incarnation:* on the journey in, towards the Center, one cleanses the "dirt of the road". On the journey out, one is born anew to consciously dwell in a human body temple made "holy" by having got a fresh taste of the Center.**

**A Labyrinth grooves in a "Royal Road", a ceremonial pathway designed according to Sacred Geometry principles such as Harmonic Proportion (Phi), Vortex physics and Alternation of Energy. For instance, the pendular (alternatively clockwise & counter-clockwise) spin of the meanders maps out a balance between the right and the left hemispheres of the brain.**

**↑ The labyrinth on the roof of the American Psychology Association's building, Washington D.C. (Credit).**

***"We live in a culture that is, in many ways, based on a false dualistic Either/Or paradigm. We are taught to understand the world around us by defining each thing and then separating ourselves from it. In the Reclaiming Tradition, we are practicing a religion that utilizes a more inclusive Both/And model for understanding the Universe and Beyond. This viewpoint allows us to understand All That Is by aligning and integrating with all that exists. The labyrinth is a tool that can help us to understand in our bones, perhaps even on a cellular level, how it is that Both/And works. The labyrinth can assist us as we make a global paradigm shift away from dualism, to an integrated and interconnected understanding of all that is."***

**Sarah Campbell (Credit)**

**The self-integration benefits of labyrinths are now applied by practitioners of "educational kinesiology". This new field of education is based on the premises that moving with intention leads to optimal learning. Through movement-based programs, breakthroughs in learning and self-integration are achieved.**
**For instance, see http://www.braingym.org**

**Example. The Chartres labyrinth contains a perfect reciprocal alternation of symmetry forming a complete brain yoga circuit: on the way in *and* the way out the walker turns to the right and to the left in exactly the same rhythm and following exactly the same alternation of quarter arcs (18) and half arcs (13).**

**9 - 6 - (1) - 6 - 9**

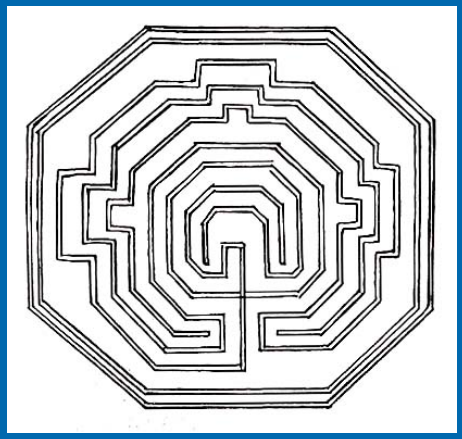
**[..--..-.-.-..-.(-).-..-.-.-..--..}**

# SG304A.5.4 The Labyrinth as Protective Magic

*Apotropaic magic* (Greek *apotrepein* = to ward off. *apo-* = away + *trepein* = to turn) is a type of magic intended to "turn away" harm or evil influences, as in *deflecting misfortune.*

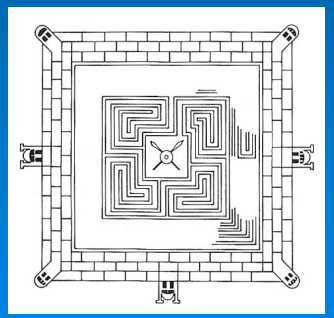
The all-round protective function of labyrinths is made clear by:
- Their location (threshold drawings in India, placement close to the western portal of medieval cathedrals).
- Their use as amulets to ward off evil.
- The use of the labyrinth design as a battle formation (*chakra-vyuha*) in Indian mythology.
- The Roman Game of Troy being performed at the founding of a city, according to Virgil. *"By riding the labyrinthine paths of the Game of Troy while the walls are being built, the powers of defense were believed to be enhanced magically" (H. Kern).*
- Roman mosaic labyrinths were a graphic rendition of the Game of Troy and depict a square fortified city. They were often placed near the entrance of the house.

As explained by H. Kern: *"Underlying (the function of protection) was the notion that evil spirits can fly only in a straight line and would not be able to find their way through a labyrinth's twists & turns. An attacker becomes confused by the labyrinth's unpredictability."*



↑ Drawing from a *Kolam* pattern book. In Southern India (Tamil area), Hindu women create such drawings just beyond the doorstep (threshold). This is repeated every morning, before sunrise, during Margali, the month thought by the Tamils to consist entirely of inauspicious days (mid-December to mid-January). This ritual is intended to invoke magical protection for the residents of the house. (H. Kern).

←← Cretan Labyrinth tattoos. Left: Western (Credit). Right: South Indian pattern. (H. Kern).



← Roman mosaic labyrinth. 2nd c. CE.

The surround represents a wall with fortified towers - thus clearly showing the protective function of the design.

(H. Kern)

← Labyrinth amulet from Rajasthan. 19th century.

It is believed that by carrying the talisman or by keeping it in one's home, the "difficulties" will subside.

(H. Kern)

# SG304A.5.5.1 Labyrinth - Music & Rhythm (1)

**We have mentioned earlier the traditions of dances associated with the Cretan (7-rings) labyrinth, and specially the Nordic "Troy Towns" or Maiden Dances. Obviously, these ancient choreographic rituals in labyrinths were actually danced to music and/or rhythm. Interestingly, like the classical labyrinth, music has seven segments or tones, and like the labyrinth, music often has two phases which are complementary and create a full cycle.**

***"Tonal music has a harmonic structure. In classical harmony, the tonic is the chord that represents maximum order, stability and clarity: it is the 'answer'. The question is posed by the 'dominant', a chord that is unstable and must ultimately resolve to the tonic. Music of the Common Practice Era (the period from Bach to Brahms) is built out of the opposition between dominant and tonic, or the alternation of 'tension and release', as it is often described."*** **(Music professor Anthony Brandt of Rice University. (Credit)**
**[Note: in the 20th/21st-century concert music, this complementarity is no longer maintained, or shall we say, understood].**

**"Tension and release" is a very human phenomenon associated with everything from exercise to yoga, breath and orgasm. Repeatedly alternating left and right motions seem to be healthy for the complementary balance of our brain's hemispheres, especially when combined with music. The 3-D coordination, equilibrium and integration functions of the human body-mind system can be powerfully optimized by the conscious and harmonious alternation of left (inner/feminine oriented) and right (outward/masculine oriented) motions. The goal is to achieve an optimum centering constantly fine-tuned by the counter-balancing of left/right adjustments. It is like the art of walking a tight rope (nowadays called a *slackline*). The center of the labyrinth is the place of maximum balance & resonant centering.**

**A traditional example of the power of left-right alternation is the yogic breath technique called Alternate Nostril Breathing (*Anuloma Viloma*). This technique takes full advantage of the natural *nasal cycle* (each nostril takes over every 2-3 hours) and its corresponding brain functions. It has indeed been found that the electrical activity of the brain is greater on the side opposite the less congested nostril. This modern discovery was known by ancient yogis who developed alternate breathing.**

**A more recent example of the healing power of rhythmic, alternate motion is *"Rhythm Therapy"* as discovered and developed by jazz drummer Ronnie Gardiner, an American musician who has lived and performed in Scandinavia for over thirty years. Gardiner explored the idea as a result of a tragic loss and a personal crisis. The foundation, structure, and all the different sequences that comprise the evolved form of Rhythm Therapy were developed to help stroke victims recover their coordination and mental capacities. This therapy combines physical movements of the left and right side of the body with musical rhythms, much like dancing. Alternating signs in red and blue, representing the left and right arms and legs, are shown to patients who learn to move the corresponding body parts. This "dance" is repeated to a musical rhythm and, in response, the neural pathways, damaged from a stroke, begin to mend and "re-set."**

**In a way, the labyrinth IS a musical instrument, a container designed for bouncing back & forth standing waves reinforcing each other in a harmonic fashion. The labyrinth creates positive interference between waves of whole body motion and builds up a *crescendo* of centered balance in the body-mind-spirit complex. It could even be said that, beyond the musical/rhythmic components, the labyrinth is a full *vibrational instrument,* a frequency symphony, combining and wave-guiding all the sensory & neural inputs to an experience of oneness. The labyrinth is an instrument at the scale of the human body-field that you step into, play from inside out and eventually have to become: no more external observation. As an insider's medium, the labyrinth is teaching & imprinting a template of unifying optimal dance with the ambient universal quantum field of inter-connected oneness. After entering and walking the labyrinth to its very center, one is initiated and "primed" for walking life and each "now" moment as a labyrinth, a full complete & self-contained cosmic vortex.**

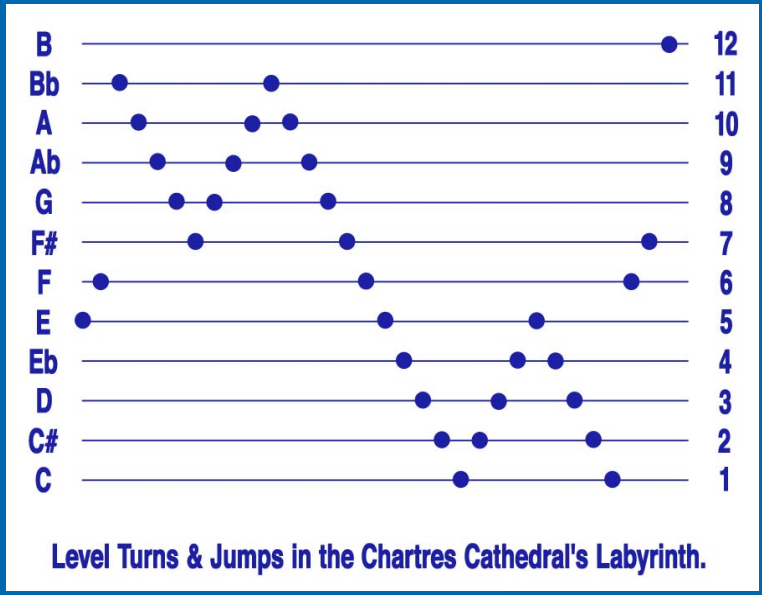
**The labyrinth experience is a vibrational, holographic bridge between sub-conscious and super-conscious: its effects are much deeper and long-lasting than the actual walk upon the physical labyrinth. Such is the power of sacred geometry as an archetypal, primordial ground of being.**

**<u>As designs, labyrinths show musical notations:</u>**

- **The 7-rings labyrinth is a ready model of the 7 notes scale in the following sequence: 3 2 1 4 / 7 6 5 8 Mi Re Do Fa / Si La Sol Do. (See supra: 7 Rings Path).**
- **The Chartres labyrinth has an inner ternary rhythmic structure (J. Hébert) which unfolds a specific sequence in the dodecaphonic scale (see next page). Some researchers believe that it might encode harmonic keys controlling local & global grid systems, via the location of the medieval cathedral sites.**

# SG304A.5.5.2 Labyrinth - Music & Rhythm (2)

If we plot the 32 turns (28 full turns and 4 level jumps) of the Chartres labyrinth on a musical scale and assign the 12 rings (11 + center) to the musical notes of the dodeca scale (regular scale + 2 sharps & 3 flats), we obtain diagram #1 below. Plotting the pattern in mirror symmetry on a polar grid, we obtain diagram #2.




Level Turns & Jumps in the Chartres Cathedral's Labyrinth.

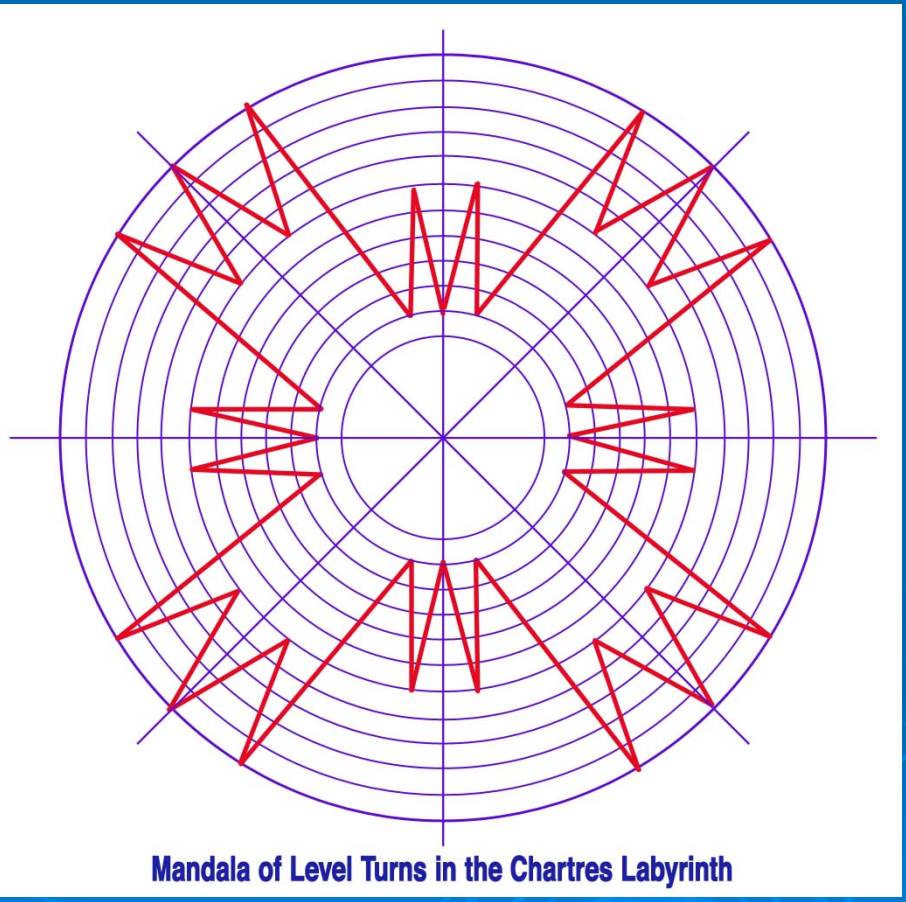
↑ Diagram #1.

Plotting on the 12 notes musical scale the sequence of level turns and jumps in the Chartres Labyrinth. Level 12 is the center.

Note the reverse symmetry pattern: 11-10-9-8 / 7 / 8-9-10-11 and 1- 2-3-4 / 5 / 4-3-2-1. And also the full descent-ascent: 11-10-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1. This traces a wave pattern: Peak - dip - peak - big dip - peak - dip - peak. It can also be read: "M and reverse M" or "reverse W and W".

The entire sequence of 28 full turns and 4 level jumps is:

5-6-11-10-9-8-7-8-9-10-
11-10-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1-
2-3-4-5-4-3-2-1-6-7-12



Mandala of Level Turns in the Chartres Labyrinth

↑ Diagram #2.

Symmetry plotting (polar grid) of the Chartre's labyrinth wave pattern. This design is called the "Cross-Star of Chartres".

# SG304A.5.6 Labyrinths as Playgrounds

**Note: clergy is now careful to keep labyrinths *outside* the church. Children and *improvised playfulness* are still seen as incompatible with the religious seriousness of grown-ups. Yet all wisdom traditions have pointed to the necessity to become little children again by re-learning how to be in the spontaneous Now and how to dance life.**

**↑ Kids playing on the Chartres-type labyrinth at the first Christian Church. Albany, TX. Credit.**

**↑ Playing in a labyrinth. Mendocino labyrinth by Alex Champion. (*Real Simple* magazine. May 2002).**

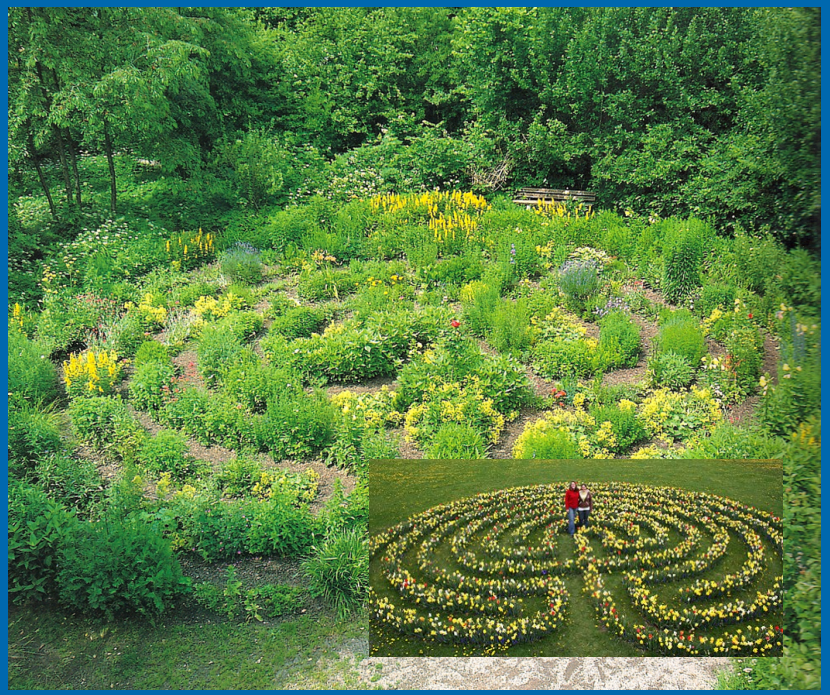
**↑ Students of the Terra Rosa School playing in the Sedona Lodge Labyrinth. 2001.**

**A teacher's observation (Credit):**
***"The only instruction given to a group of teenagers ready to walk the labyrinth was that at some point during their walk they needed to stop and have a deep thought or moment and then they had to be willing to share that thought at the end of the walk.***
***It was amazing to watch these kids in action as they were serious and the seriousness then led to dancing, running, singing, skipping and playing in the labyrinth. In the midst of this going on, some would stop to have a deep moment of reflection and as quickly as they stopped they went right on to what they were doing before.***
***Some of the thoughts the kids got while walking the labyrinth in one evening were things that took me a year to a year and a half of labyrinth walking before I got them."***

***"Children laugh and giggle when they see a labyrinth. If handed a finger labyrinth, they need no instructions: a right- or left-hand pointer finger immediately goes to the mouth of the labyrinth and the tracing of the pattern begins."*** **(www.healingabout.com)**

# SG304A.5.7 Labyrinths as Gardens

Credit.



Labyrinth garden in Germany. Credit.

Prairie labyrinth in Kansas City. (Credit).

# SG304A.5.8.1 Labyrinths as Community Builders (1)

*A Labyrinth is built by a community for a community, as a node of the global energy grid.*

**A labyrinth, like the medieval church & cathedral, is built by the people and for the people. It is displaying a group size design, larger than the individuals who built it. And it has to be activated & used by groups of people.**

**A walkable labyrinth is a temple, a sacred site designed to give communities of individuals a common ground of oneness and make them feel their inter-connectedness. A riverbed of spirit energy is created by the pilgrims walking the path of the labyrinth. Even if you walk it all alone, you will partake of a group ceremony by energizing the labyrinth's vibratory field.**

**The sacred geometry of the labyrinth facilitates the convergence and harmonization of community energies. Co-create a labyrinth in your community and you will feel connected to the global web of life. Bring children into it and they will teach you again the playfulness of life.**

**"The children walking the labyrinth were precious." (greensborodailyphoto.com)**

**11-rings Chartres-type labyrinth at Angel Valley Retreat Center, Sedona. (angelvalley.org)**

***Many have walked the very same path before you, and many will walk it after you.***

**(Again, the labyrinth is a metaphor for "human life".)**

**"Two days later we walk it deliberately as a community." (www.eastchurch.org)**

# SG304A.5.8.2 Labyrinths as Community Builders (2)

On June 18th, 2011, the Carleton Place Community labyrinth, Ontario, was dedicated during a pubic ceremony. The labyrinth design is a classical 7-circuit.

- Grass path defined by stone pavers.
- The inspirational stones set into the pathway lead to the pausing stone at the labyrinth entrance.
- Four seating areas.
- Wheelchair accessible path around the labyrinth.
- Granite bench with a Chartres 11-circuit finger labyrinth inscribed.

## Dedication Prayer for the Carleton Community Labyrinth

*Leader:* Please join me as we dedicate this labyrinth.
*Community: We dedicate this labyrinth to the well-being of our community.*
*Leader:* May this labyrinth be a place where we welcome the hopes that are brought here, as well as the pain, the questions, the sighing, the laughter, the tears, and expressions of surprise.
*Community: We dedicate this labyrinth to the well-being of our community.*
*Leader:* May those who arrive in despair find the courage to step over the threshold into the possibility of transformation.
*Community: We dedicate this labyrinth to the well-being of our community.*
*Leader:* May those who walk here seeking wisdom, find it.
*Community: We dedicate this labyrinth to the well-being of our community.*
*Leader:* May those who travel the labyrinth's path carrying heavy burdens discover the ability to set them down.
*Community: We dedicate this labyrinth to the well-being of our community.*
*Leader:* May the center be a place where those who are exhausted find rest, where those who are grieving receive comfort, and where those who are dejected encounter unexpected joy.
*Community: We dedicate this labyrinth to the well-being of our community.*
*Leader:* May those discovering new perspectives here, find the courage to act on them.
*Community: We dedicate this labyrinth to the well-being of our community.*
*Leader:* May all who experience the labyrinth discover Divine Love as their companion.
*Community: We dedicate this labyrinth to the well-being of our community.*

← Offering the prayers.

# SG304A.5.9.1 Labyrinths as Educational Tools (1)

**Labyrinths can be successfully used as playgrounds that double up as educational tools and become part of the collective group mind of the students and the teachers. The theme of the labyrinth with its different sizes and types and various methods of construction can also be integrated into the school's overall curriculum, in terms of hands-on activities and class projects. Here is the example of the labyrinth resources provided by Gabriella (the "Sound Weaver") as described in her website //peacetrails.com.**

***"I started creating and designing labyrinths as part of a school project at Coombes primary school in Aborfield / Wokingham in order to give children times of reflection and centering built into the timetable - which has proven very successful and popular with both children and teachers.***

***Over the years we have created stone labyrinths for permanent use and others painted or burnt into the grass - these are used vigorously for a few weeks and then fade. For the special occasions, sound and music provide the atmosphere for reflection to support the walkers. Even stone labyrinths get dismantled and rebuilt with a new design every couple of years to give new children the opportunity to be part of the building process."***

# SG304A.5.9.2 Labyrinths as Educational Tools (2)

↑↓ Creation of a 7-rings labyrinth at an Indianapolis Public School. 2010. //walklabyrinths.blogspot.com/

↑ Students painting a school labyrinth. First, they had to trace it on the ground and to master skills of measurements, large scale design, symmetry etc… http://www.laughingflowerlabyrinth.com

← (Credit).

↑ Labyrinth Balance Board for thinking & feeling with the feet. The goal is to stand up on the board and tip back & forth to get the balls move to the center space. Combines logical thinking (left brain) and active play (right brain). Improves balancing skills and neuro-motor activities.

# SG304A.5.10 The Geomancy of Labyrinths

Ancient labyrinth & church builders were keenly aware of the geomantic aspects of the sites they used. The Christian era is no exception: while disparaging the old "pagan" traditions, deities & sites, the Christian Church oftentimes took over ancient geomantic sites & knowledge, just pasting upon them a new label.

Churches & labyrinths were built and rebuilt upon very ancient "holy spots" consecrated by a long tradition. A excellent example is Chartres. Chartres, the Celtic place of national assembly in the tribal land of the Carnutes, was centrally placed within the Celtic realm. The hillside upon which the Chartres cathedral was built (and re-built) was a sacred site going all the way back to megalithic times. Moreover, the entrance of the Chartres labyrinth corresponds exactly with the entrance of the ancient cathedral ("Eglise de Fulbert") and may just perpetuates the very location of a sacred geomantic spot venerated for eons.

Using dowsing and other subtle techniques, ancient geomancers were the guardians of an empirical but venerated energy science re: the orientation of grid (ley) lines, the para-magnetism of stones, the nature of the local geology, the underground configuration of water currents and, generally speaking, the overall *harmonic qualities* of the building site.

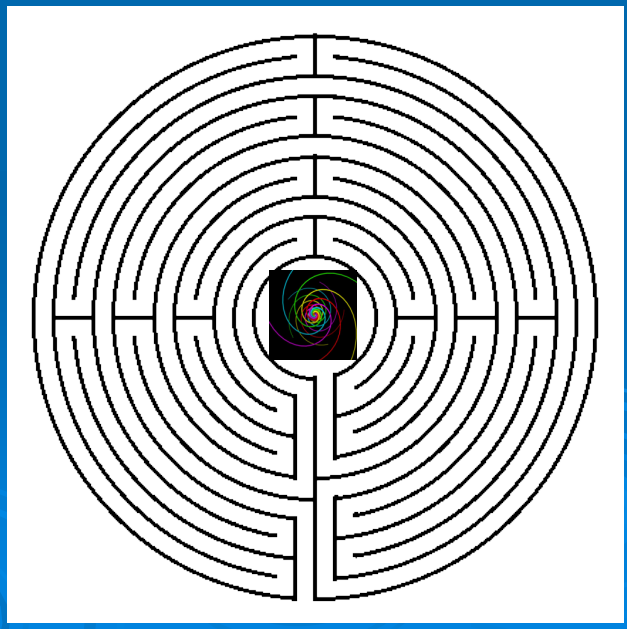
The church, cathedral or labyrinth was the material manifestation of an energy blueprint based on sacred knowledge and the continuation of a tradition of global guardianship of "sacred sites". When labyrinths are built in a location tuned to the larger geomantic matrix, they are true temples i.e. sacred fields of higher frequency and doorways of transformation, healing and revelation.

The many new labyrinths that are being built all over the world are contemporary sacred sites that create, when consciously designed with geomantic knowledge, a field beneficial for all aspects of the web of life: people, soil, animals, plants, agriculture, weather… Labyrinths are generators of life force and harmonic attractor/capacitors that operate as vortex points in the pervading quantum field.

The art of geomancy applied to labyrinths results in whirls of operational sacred geometry optimizing the charge compression, vortical symmetry and fractal recursiveness necessary to accelerate the self-awareness of a place or a human being, i.e. make them sacred.

*"Church labyrinths are always located on telluric power sites, known since ancient times as featuring a high vibratory rate. (When analyzed geomantically), these sites display crossings and overlays of several telluric phenomena…"* such as telluric alignments, underground water currents, geological faults or magnetic lines…
Stéphane Cardineaux, Swiss geo-biologist. (http://www.geniedulieu.ch)

↑ Chartres was the center of the Celtic culture.
(John Michell. *At the Center of the World.*)

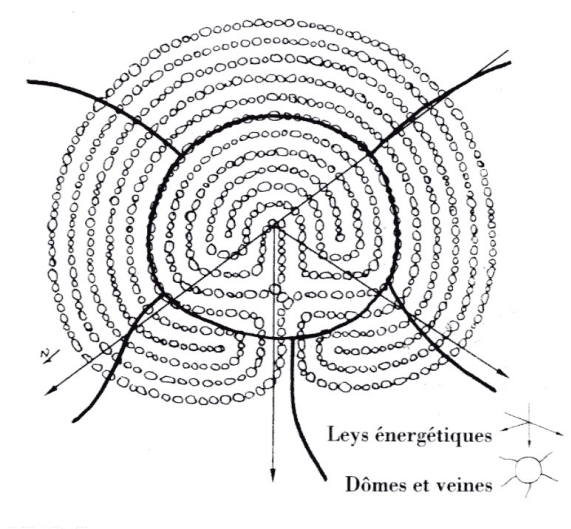


← The Chartres labyrinth (script version) optimizing a Phi-spiral vortex (symbolized by the flower) at its very center.

# SG304A.5.11.1 Labyrinths & Dowsing (1)

**Interesting insights into the location, orientation and size of labyrinths are provided by dowsing techniques. Dowsing is the art of using a pendulum or L-shaped rods to locate something by using sensory means other than the five senses. Looking for water is a traditional use of dowsing.**

**Due to its intimate connection with the water element, through the geometry of "meandering", a labyrinth is the expression as well as the co-agent of the existing underground water system and distribution networks.**

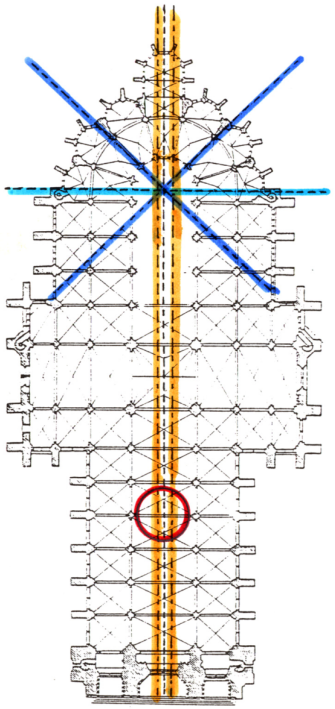



**↑ Underground water currents and telluric lines (North-South) framing the location of a stone labyrinth. (Galgberget, Sweden).**

**The above sketch (taken from the French edition of "Les Labyrinthes" by Sig Lonegren) shows what dowsers call a "dome" or water hub attracting and redistributing smaller water "veins" (in bold black curves). A dome oftentimes dowses as configuring to one of the walls of the labyrinth.**

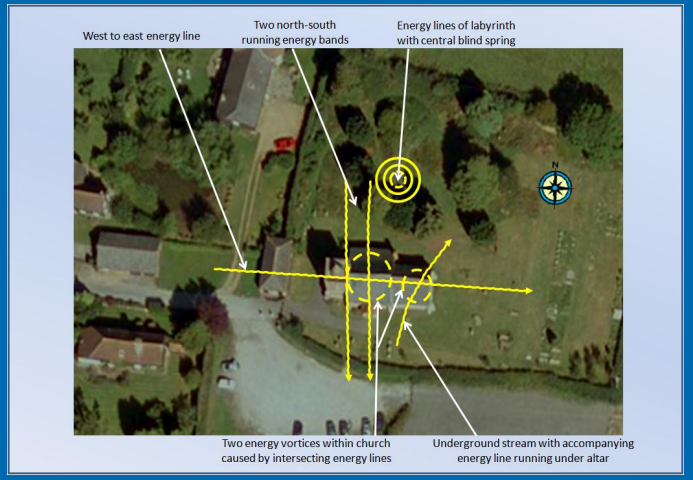
**The straight light lines represent "leylines" or telluric/magnetic energy alignments.**

**(Sig Lonegren. *Les Labyrinthes*.)**

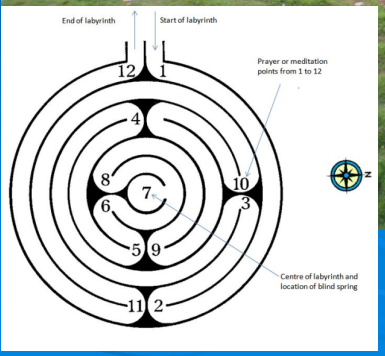


**↑ Cathedral of Amiens. Telluric (orange) alignments and aquifer (blue) currents.**

**(P. Darcheville. *De la Pierre aux Etoiles*.)**




**↑↓ The church of Tudeley, near Tonbridge, England, is known worldwide for its stained glass windows by Russian emigré artist Marc Chagall. Near the church there is a turf labyrinth precisely located by dowsing as being above a central "blind spring" (bubbling spot of underground water). (Image credit).**

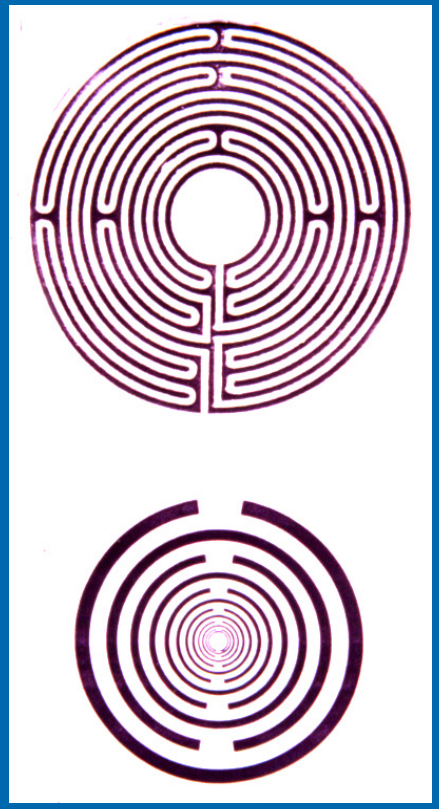


# SG304A.5.11.2 Labyrinths & Dowsing (2)

Labyrinths seem to not only interact with water veins close to the ground surface, but also - and maybe more powerfully - with what is called *"primary water"*. Primary water is new water formed by chemical reactions deep inside the earth. This water, driven by massive pressure, works its way toward the surface through faults and fissures in normally impervious crystalline rock. While you may have to drill deeper for primary water, it is generally not subject to pollution or variations in rainfall, and usually sustains production for decades. Also, primary water sources are available in areas of the world where ground water is exhausted or does not exist in significant quantity. (See Bill Cox website //primarywater.com).

As reported by Sig Lonegren in his website www.geomancy.org, various dowsers & labyrinth builders have observed the primary water drawing-power of labyrinths. There seem to be a special attractive power between labyrinths that are being consciously used, and primary water. All researchers have noted that human conscious interaction seems to be critical.

A documented example is the stone Chartres-type labyrinth at Norman Castle in South Western Wales. Towards the end of the construction of the labyrinth, a primary water dome was observed moving under the castle towards the labyrinth (a geological "impossibility" but a conscious "reality"). Upon dowsing the finished labyrinth, Sig Lonegren reports: *"I dowsed a dome of water under the goal of the labyrinth, and five veins, one of which exited out the mouth of the labyrinth!"*.



↑ Above: Labyrinth of Sens.
Below: Radionic emitter using a labyrinth-type geometry.

Body-size mandalas, labyrinths are energy circuits wave-guiding attention to its own center. They act like radionic antennas attracting / emitting signals of coherence and harmony.

Labyrinths work on the principles of symmetric alternation and river-like meandering.

↑ Marty Cain is often called the "Labyrinth Lady" for she has shared her love of labyrinths and skill in dowsing with thousands of people since 1990. Her keynote speeches for regional dowsing conventions and labyrinth gatherings as well as her workshops, lectures and many articles emphasize the use of sacred space to better our lives and connect us to the Earth and all forms of life seen and unseen. She is a founding member of The Labyrinth Society.
She insists: *"Every permanent labyrinth needs to be dowsed in place in order to insure the highest good from its use."*

# SG304A.5.12.1 Labyrinths as Therapy (1)

**Research conducted at the Harvard Medical School Mind/Body Medical Institute by Dr. Herbert Benson has found that *focused walking meditations* are highly efficient at reducing anxiety and eliciting what Dr. Benson calls the *relaxation response*. Nothing new under the sky: monks around their cloisters, inspired poets and lovers of nature have been practicing this traditional form of active contemplation. Now science is approving of it and points to significant long-term health benefits, including lower blood pressure and breathing rates, reduced incidents of chronic pain, reduction of insomnia, improved fertility, greater powers of concentration and a sense of control and efficiency in one's life. Labyrinth walking is among the simplest forms of focused walking meditation, and the demonstrated health benefits have led hundreds of hospitals, health care facilities, and spas to install labyrinths in recent years.**

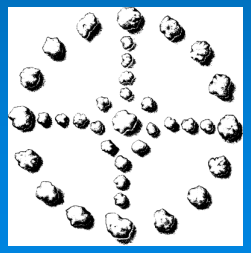
**Our personality and life is determined by which brain, left or right, we allow to be dominant in resolving problems, making decisions and just live our life. Wholistic therapies seek to make opposite parts of our brain trust each other & cooperate to work together in peace and harmony. Labyrinth "focused walking" is just such an practice in "team building" between the left and right brains, gracefully and rhythmically engaging them to cooperate and achieve oneness.**

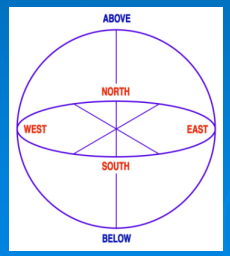
**According to the Labyrinth Society, tracing the path of the labyrinth achieves spiritual and emotional calmness in three stages:**
**1. The first is called "Purgation" where one is supposed to release the details of life and shed thoughts of distractions. This relaxes the control from the left brain.**
**2. The second stage is called "Illumination": this when the center of the labyrinth is achieved. This is said to relax the right brain which is eager to imagine and reach creative goals.**
**3. The last stage is called "Union": this when the labyrinth path is re-traced to the beginning, allowing both brains to cooperate in a relaxed state.**

**While most contemporary labyrinth designs are either the 7-rings Cretan or the Chartres-type, there is an increasing creative effervescence in labyrinth construction and new designs are being constantly invented. People are also exploring the therapeutic and spiritual effects of a large variety of modifications of traditional labyrinth designs. Since the transformative efficiency of the labyrinth comes from the kinesthetic effect of the movements along with the rhythmical structure of the path, there are a lot of variables that can be used to achieve therapeutic effects or to heal specific ailments. Furthermore, the same labyrinth can be modified with entry on different lanes (rings) and can be made "right-hand" or "left-hand" thus allowing to play with clockwise or counter-clockwise rotation. Knowledge is being gathered and we will soon have a list of proven "labyrinth medicines" tailored to specific needs. As noted by J. Hébert: *"Different people prefer different labyrinths. Different personal situations are better expressed or call for 'nursing' and nurturing by different labyrinths."***

## Medicine Wheel & Labyrinth

**Both sacred designs invite to an *emergence* and offer a journey from the periphery of life/consciousness to the center. Both are a transmutation of the Below into the Above through the walking meditation around the 4 directions.**

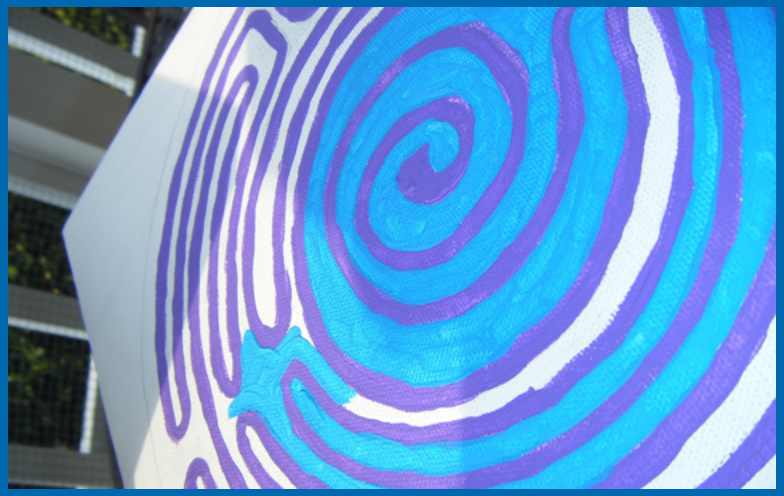




**← Many public labyrinths are now wheelchair accessible.**
**Credit**

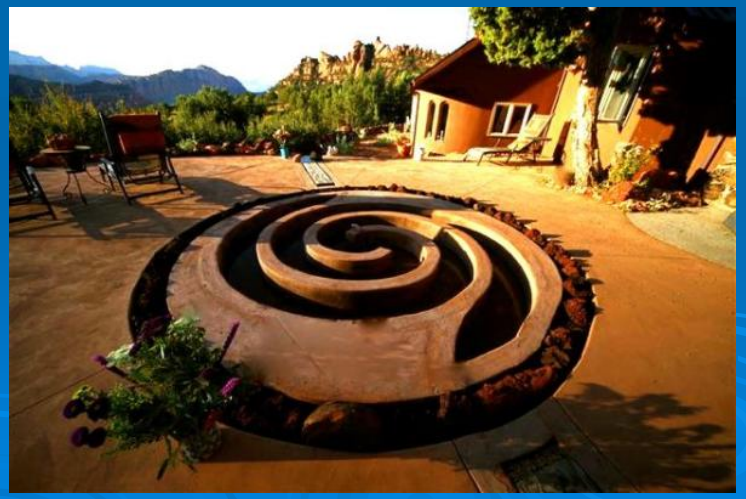
# SG304A.5.12.2 Labyrinths as Therapy (2)

↑ "Trojan Ride" is a labyrinth specially designed for horse-assisted therapy. First created in New Harmony, IN. Available since 2011 at Whitewater Mesa, NM.
86 feet in diameter w/ 48 inch pathways providing a 36 inch rideable space, 8 feet wide turns into center and entrance, 30 feet diameter center.

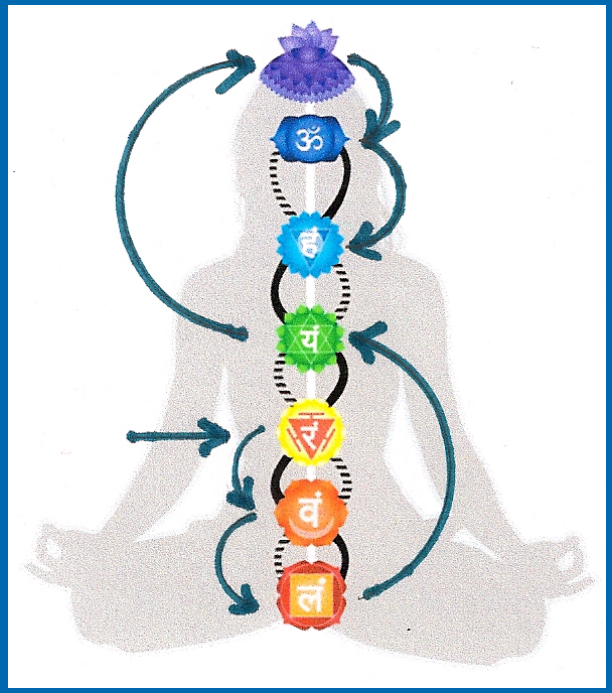


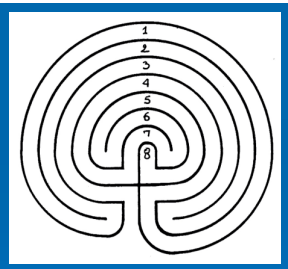
↑ The Art Therapy of drawing/painting labyrinths. (Credit).

↑ This contemporary South African design displays the image of a person with raised arms, symbolizing hope. There are two entrance paths and a third path exits between the two entrances through the body of the person, as a new way forward. This acknowledges that while journeys to a place of common healing do not start from the same place, they end up in the same place. Halfway through the walk, one starts to walk in the other's footsteps, thus giving the opportunity to look at the situation from a different perspective or through the other's eyes. (Credit).



↑ A water labyrinth to "swim". (alwaysonvacation.com)





# SG304A.5.13 Labyrinths and Chakras

**As we already noted, the 7-rings labyrinth is a perfect template for many 7-levels systems such as the music octave or the rainbow colors … It also applies to the subtle energy centers in the human body-mind system: the 7 *chakras* traditionally described in Yogic practice and spiritual wisdom.**

**By coloring the 7 paths with their corresponding 7 chakras from Root (1st path - red) to Crown (7th path - indigo), we create a meditational device, an instrument of self-enquiry. In this Chakra-labyrinth meditation practice, the pattern for walking the paths is quite interesting, and provides for deep insights:**

**• WAY IN: 3-2-1-4-7-6-5-8**
**(Solar Plexus, Sex, Root, Heart, Crown, Third Eye, Throat, Universe).**

**• WAY OUT: 8-5-6-7-4-1-2-3**
**(Universe, Throat, Third Eye, Crown, Heart, Root, Sex, Solar Plexus)**

**Some observations:**

**1. The pattern in which the chakras are walked is not the usual straight ascension from the Root to the Crown. Rather, following the geometry of the labyrinth, the entrance leads directly into the 3rd path / 3rd chakra. Interestingly, this is said to be the "power center" or energy factory of the human body-mind. Many traditions have insisted on consciously using this center to circulate and renew the energy, calling it "Hara", "Dan Tian" (the "red field" or "sea of qi", in Chinese) or "Manipura" (the "city of jewels", in Sanskrit).**
**On the way out, one exits the labyrinth from this same power center, as if the labyrinth is suggesting to be ready to tackle the world in a more integrated way.**

**2. This exercise gently requires that the walker spends a significant amount of time attending to the lower chakras (Root, Sex, Solar Plexus) which are most connected to the physicality and emotionality of the body (the "animal nature"): those corresponding paths will be encountered first and need to be mastered with consciousness. The 4th path, corresponding to the Heart chakra, is walked next. The Heart is traditionally the point of Balance between lower and upper chakras; it is a transition to the chakras that are more spiritual in nature (Throat, Third Eye, and Crown). On the way in and out, the Heart is the central reference.**

**3. Exiting the labyrinth, the walker returns to the lower chakras at the end of the walk. It is a familiar pattern of energy practice: ground, do spiritual work, re-ground.**

**4. Using this practice, the walker can connect with each chakra individually, activating all of their energy centers during the walk. With meditative attention and witnessing, the walker will make observations, including the existence of "blocks" or limiting beliefs, and then use that information to heal and re-activate the chakras.**

**[Inspired by Sarah Campbell (www.reclaimingquarterly.org)]**

# SG304A.5.14 Labyrinths as Mandala Vortices

↑ Among the 49 miniatures in this "Universal History" (1287) is the above labyrinth of a Cretan type, with 15 circuits. A medieval vortex?
9 circuits are visible, yet there must be 15 around the sphere since there are 3"L" or coaxial angles in each quadrant.

← The basic dynamics of a 7-rings labyrinth is a spiral.

(www.labyreims.com)

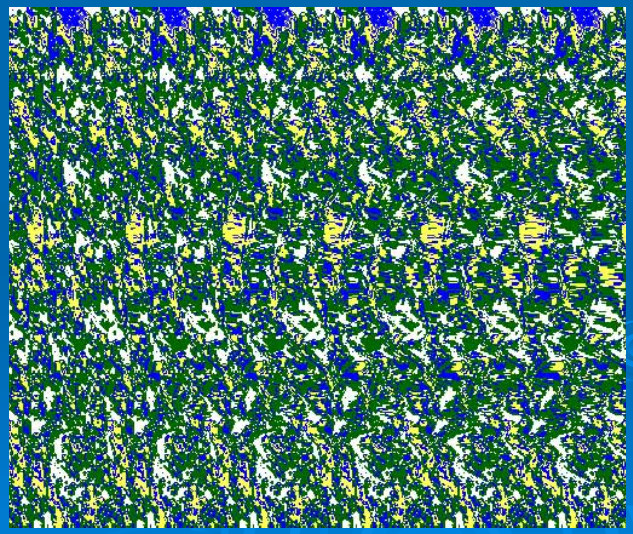
If we meander through a labyrinth we have to make alternating left / right turns and twists. At the same time, we turn inwards and outwards until we finally reach the center. We are progressively *spiraled*. There is a churning, an overall spin that helps the walker to let go, to open up and to get in touch with other, more subtle aspects of their being.

The labyrinth is the flat, 2D, projection of the centripetal (aiming at center) spirals of a *vortex*. The *torus vortex* is assumed by physicists to be the dynamic geometry of material manifestation, from quantum to the astronomical scale. Walking a labyrinth is like entering the primary motion of the universe.

As a personal experience, the labyrinth is a concatenation of dimensions, a hub inter-connecting 2D, 3D and higher insights. A labyrinth is an interface, translating *vorticity* (the tendency to *spin*) back & forth between the human realm and higher dimensions of the universe & consciousness.

↑ Chartres labyrinth design mapped in 3D. In yogic traditions, the top of the head ("Crown chakra") is called the "1000 petals lotus". (3D Chartres labyrinth: www.palmyria.co.uk)

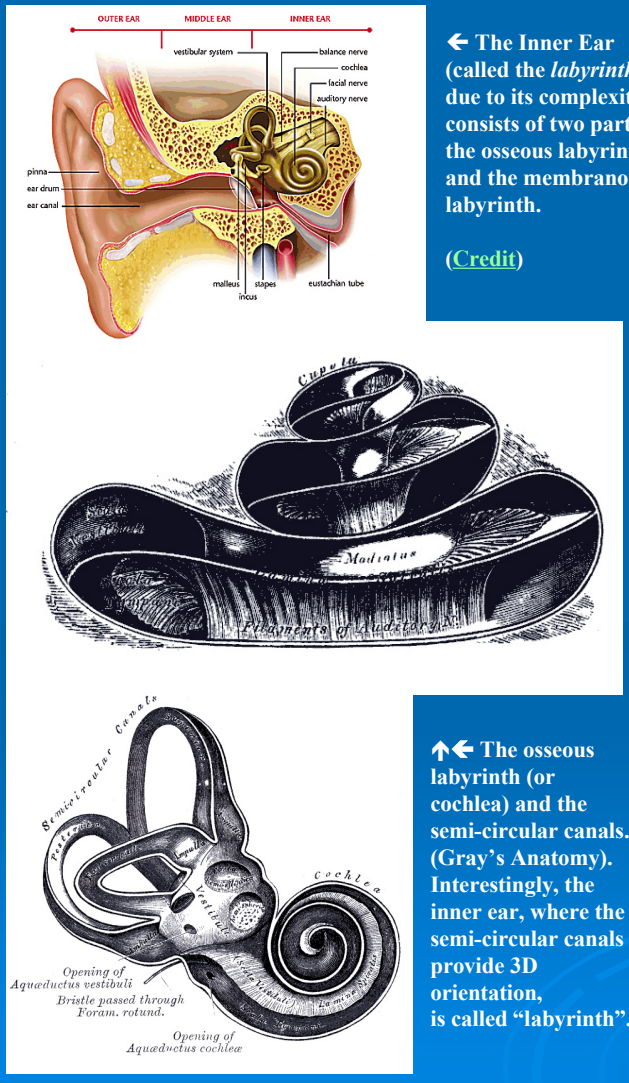
↑ A vortex of Phi spirals could represent the inner experience of walking a labyrinth. (Graphics: Dan Winter).



↑ Labyrinth stereogram. By Dan Johnston. Credit. Instructions: expand the size and focus in front of the image to see the 7-rings laby popping out. Then, walk it with your eyes.

# SG304A.5.15 Labyrinths & Body Coordination

**Two specific parts of the human body are directly related to the labyrinth: the cochlea (or osseous labyrinth) in the ear, and the cerebellum. Both parts are involved with motor control, bi-lateral coordination and 3D orientation: so is the labyrinth.**




**← The Inner Ear (called the *labyrinth* due to its complexity) consists of two parts: the osseous labyrinth, and the membranous labyrinth.**

**(Credit)**

**↑← The osseous labyrinth (or cochlea) and the semi-circular canals. (Gray's Anatomy). Interestingly, the inner ear, where the semi-circular canals provide 3D orientation, is called "labyrinth".**

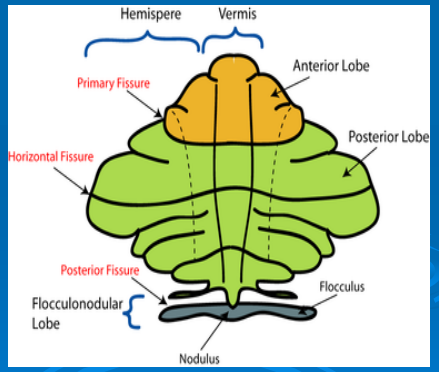
**"The cerebellum (Latin = *little brain*) is a region of the brain that plays an important role in motor control and movement-related functions. The cerebellum does not initiate movement, but it contributes to coordination, precision, and accurate timing." (Wikipedia).**

**Disfunctions of the cerebellum have to do with impaired 3D motion, balance and coordination. This complex of motor symptoms is called "ataxia".**

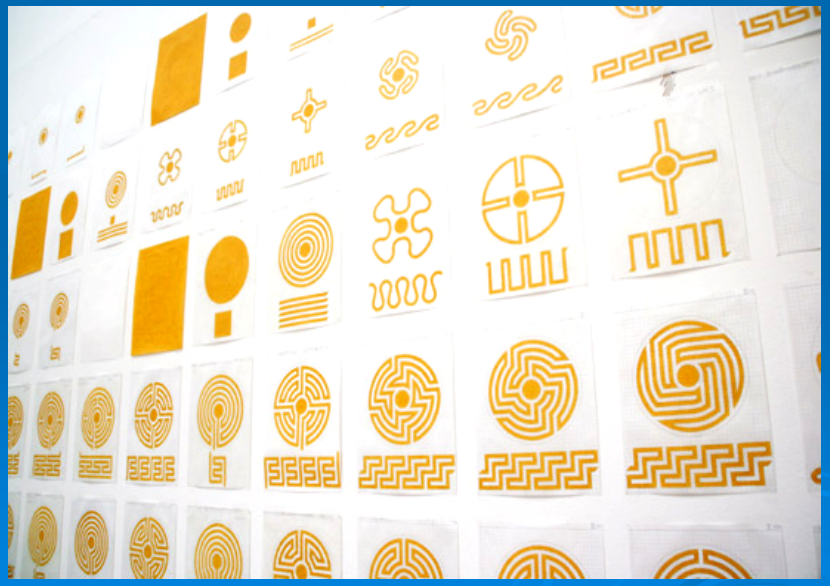
**• Damage to the the vestibular part may show up as a loss of equilibrium and, in particular, an altered walking gait, with a wide stance that indicates difficulty in balancing.**
**• Damage to the lateral zone (*cerebrocerebellum*), results in problems with skilled voluntary and planned movements. This can cause errors in the force, direction, speed and amplitude of movements.**
**• Damage to the midline portion may disrupt whole-body movements - whereas damage localized more laterally is more likely to disrupt fine movements of the hands or limbs.**
**• Damage to the upper part of the cerebellum tends to cause gait impairments and other problems with leg coordination.**
**• Damage to the lower part is more likely to cause uncoordinated or poorly aimed movements of the arms and hands, as well as difficulties in speed. (Wikipedia).**

**The medical community is becoming aware that it is essential to keep the cerebellum healthy, specially in senior years, in order to retain flexibility, control and precision in whole body or precise movements (such as finger motion). The most comprehensive exercise to maintain (or retrain) the movement-related function is the rhythmical walking of a labyrinth with its three phases: going to center, integrating at the center and retracing the neural circuit inside out.**

**3D human brain: //images.crestock.com**



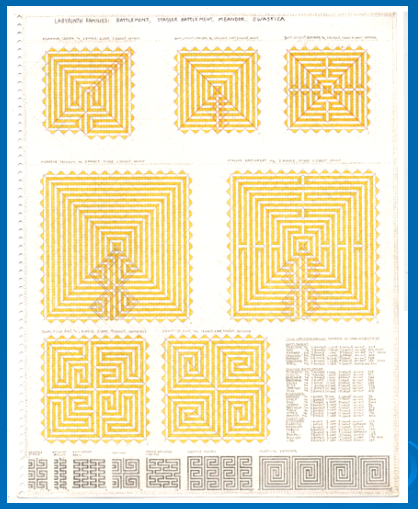

**↑ Schematic representation of the major anatomical subdivisions of the cerebellum. (Wikipedia)**



# SG304A.5.13 Labyrinths as Space Design

**The labyrinth is a raw architectural plan, says Ben Nicholson when describing his installation "Going Walkabout" at the 11th Venice Biennale of Architecture.**

***"By walking on the same spot over and over again, footprints knead the design into the ground and make imprint. A place on earth has been marked by humans through a collective repetitive act: could that be enough? All monocursal labyrinths that have been recorded are drawn here. The taxonomy has been extended to include new designs that set in motion slightly different spatial configurations of people: at one moment you walk encircled by others… time passes… and then it is you who are doing the enveloping. An architectural plan is formed that both gives and takes."***



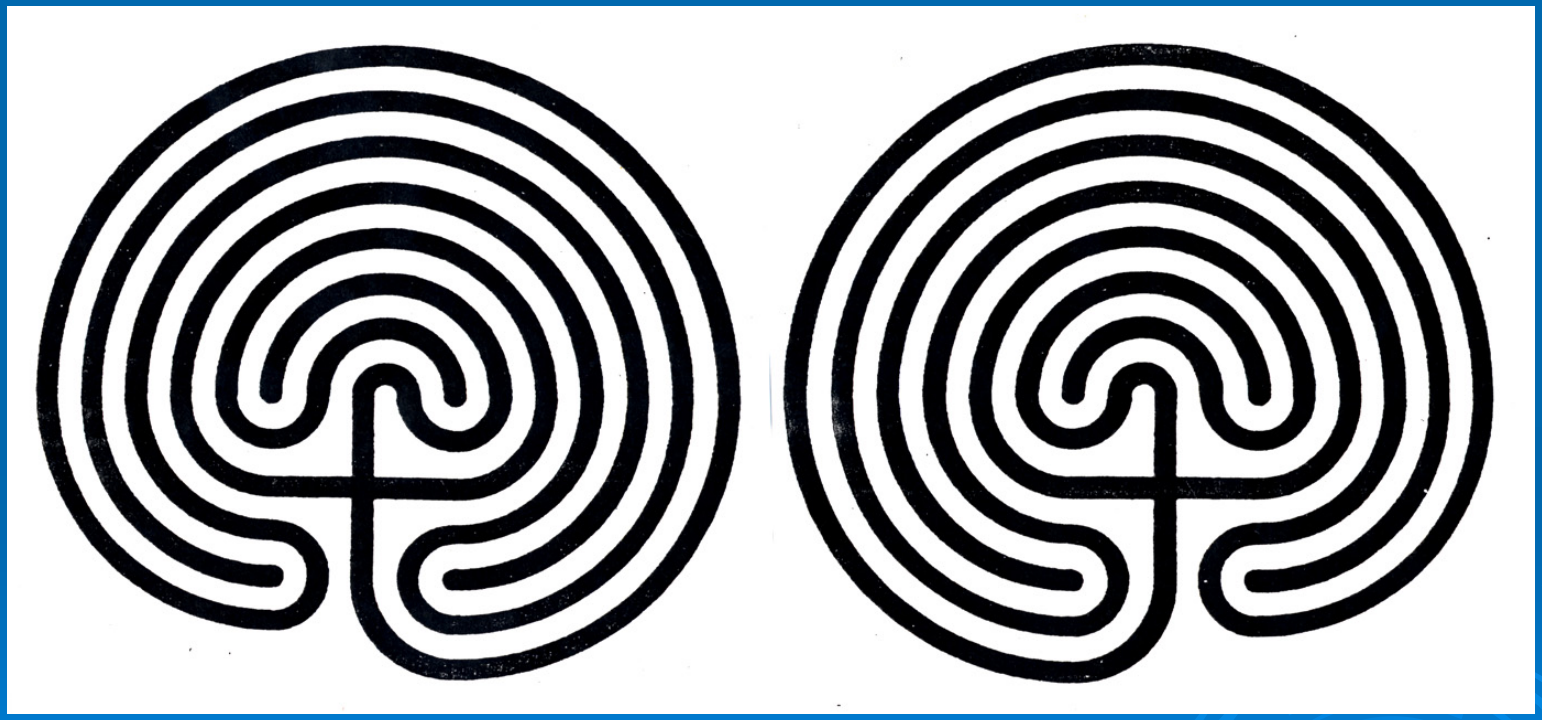
**A page from Nicholson's notebooks on display.**

# SG304A.5.16.1 Finger-Walking Labyrinths (1)

**A finger labyrinth can be a valuable addition to your spiritual repertoire. Just as walking a full sized labyrinth can be a meditation or prayer exercise, a relaxing break from your day, or a creativity enhancing practice, a finger labyrinth may be used to gain similar benefits.**

(Credit)

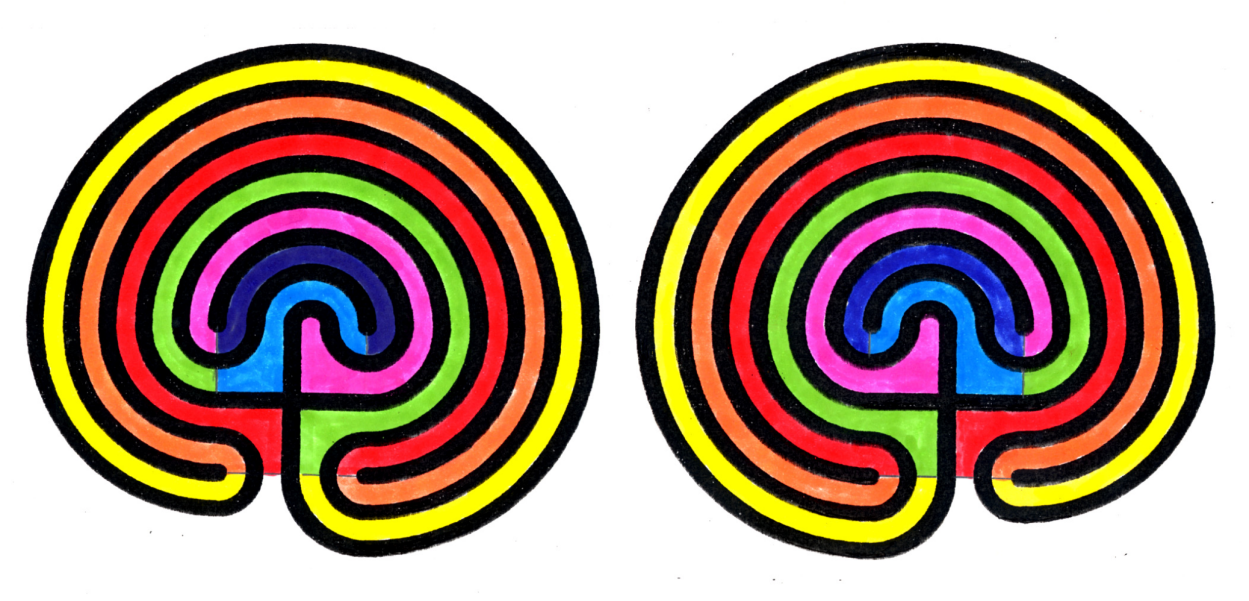
***One sees more with one's fingers than with one's glasses.***
**(Man sihet jtzund mer durch die finger denn durch die brillen).**
**Old German proverb.**



**The 7-ring Labyrinth and its mirror-image. *(A practice for balancing right / left brain).***
**1. Follow with your eye (or finger) the rainbow color progression on the left. 2. Do the same on the right.**
**3. Try to do it simultaneously, left and right.**
**These two "visual hikes" will exercise the "center of the brain", the place of balance within.**

# SG304A.5.16.2 Finger-Walking Labyrinths (2)

↓ Now, try it in colors !!!



↑ Credit.

↑ Sampler of Finger Labyrinths at www.labyrinthcompany.com

↑ Creating a finger-walking labyrinth. (Credit)

↑ Playing with meaning. (browniesmoke.com)

# SG304A.Ca Conclusion

**The labyrinth is perhaps one of the oldest, and certainly one of the most attractive and mysterious (shall we say fascinating?) symbols known to mankind. The labyrinth embeds layered ambivalence: initially seen as an object of fear (the minotaur and the "unknown"), it became a token of hope (finding the hidden treasure and reaching the Center or Spiritual Source). Throughout the cultures, the labyrinth has been used to symbolize far off lands, realms and consciousness levels - but all reachable given the right equipment (the tread of Ariadne) and wisdom.**

**Entering the labyrinth is essential and akin to jumping into the River of life. The labyrinth teaches that Knowing only happens by Being. The goal of the pilgrimage, when fully embraced, is reached in every self-referential step of the journey. And every turn of the spiraling quest reveals the fractal perspectives of Above and Below. The labyrinth is a laughing mirror of the ultimate Self.**

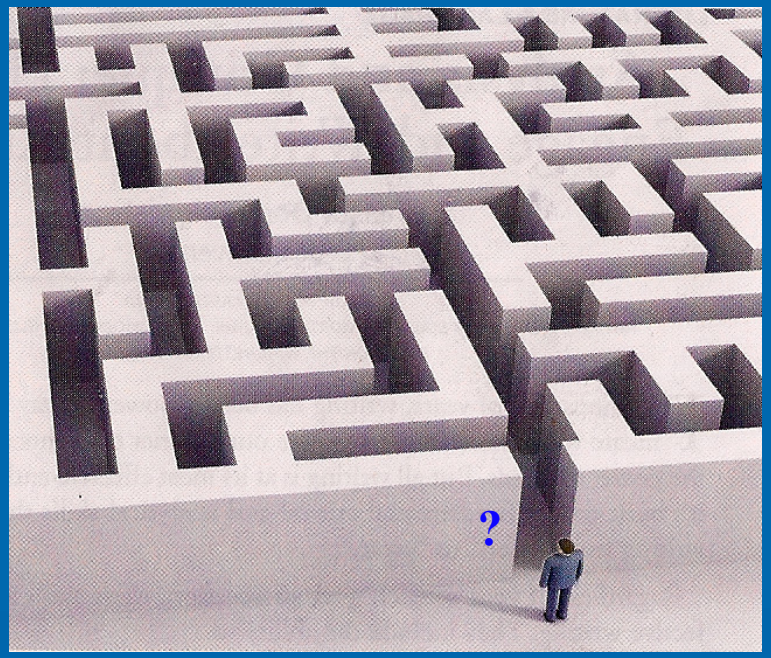
**The geometric shape of the labyrinth displays a centripetal, unicursal design pointing to an evolutionary point of return and origin. It can be described as the cross section of a vortex or a mandala, mapping out the way to the center of an energy/consciousness system. It reveals a short-cut through the multiplicity into the higher octave/spectrum yet embraces all the fractal harmonics along the way. Because of its higher-dimensional nature, the labyrinth cannot fully be explained or understood through the human mind - it can only be trusted as a wise friend or a tangible, walkable expression of the ultimate intelligence of existence.**

## The Labyrinth offers a Promise and a Gift:

**The Promise:**
**“You can never get lost”**

**The Gift:**
**“The Path is under your very feet”**

# SG304A.Cb Conclusion



**At any given moment, life offers us a choice:**
**Questioning & Arguing**
**or**
**Being Love.**

# SG304A.Cc School of Sacred Geometry - Curriculum (1)

## Sacred Geometry Introductory Level: 8 Modules

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| SG 101 | Intro I | Sacred Geometry: Universal Order & Beauty |
| SG 102 | Intro II | History & Traditions of Sacred Geometry |
| SG 103 | Intro III | Sacred Geometry: A Grand Tour |
| SG 104 | Intro IV | PHI: the Golden Ratio & the Fibonacci Series |
| SG 105 | Intro V | The Golden Rectangle & Golden Spiral |
| SG 106 | Intro VI | Pentagons, Pentagrams & the Penta-Modules |
| SG 107 | Intro VII | The Five Platonic & 13 Archimedean Solids |
| SG 108 | Intro VIII | The Vesica Piscis: Cosmic Womb of Creation |

## Sacred Geometry Intermediate Level: 8 modules

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| SG 201 | Interm I | The Monochord, Music & Cymatics |
| SG 202 | Interm II | The Power of Archetypal Numbers |
| SG 203A | Interm IIIA | Sacred Geometry Resurgence in Science - Part 1 |
| SG 203B | Interm IIIB | Sacred Geometry Resurgence in Science - Part 2 |
| SG 204 | Interm IV | PHI in the Human Body, Biology & DNA |
| SG 205A | Interm VA | The SG of Nature - Part 1: Plants & Phyllotaxis |
| SG 205B | Interm VB | The SG of Nature - Part 2: Animals & Minerals |
| SG 207 | Interm VII | SG in Architecture, Sacred Sites & Green Design |

# SG304A.Cd School of Sacred Geometry - Curriculum (2)

## Sacred Geometry Advanced Level: 8 modules

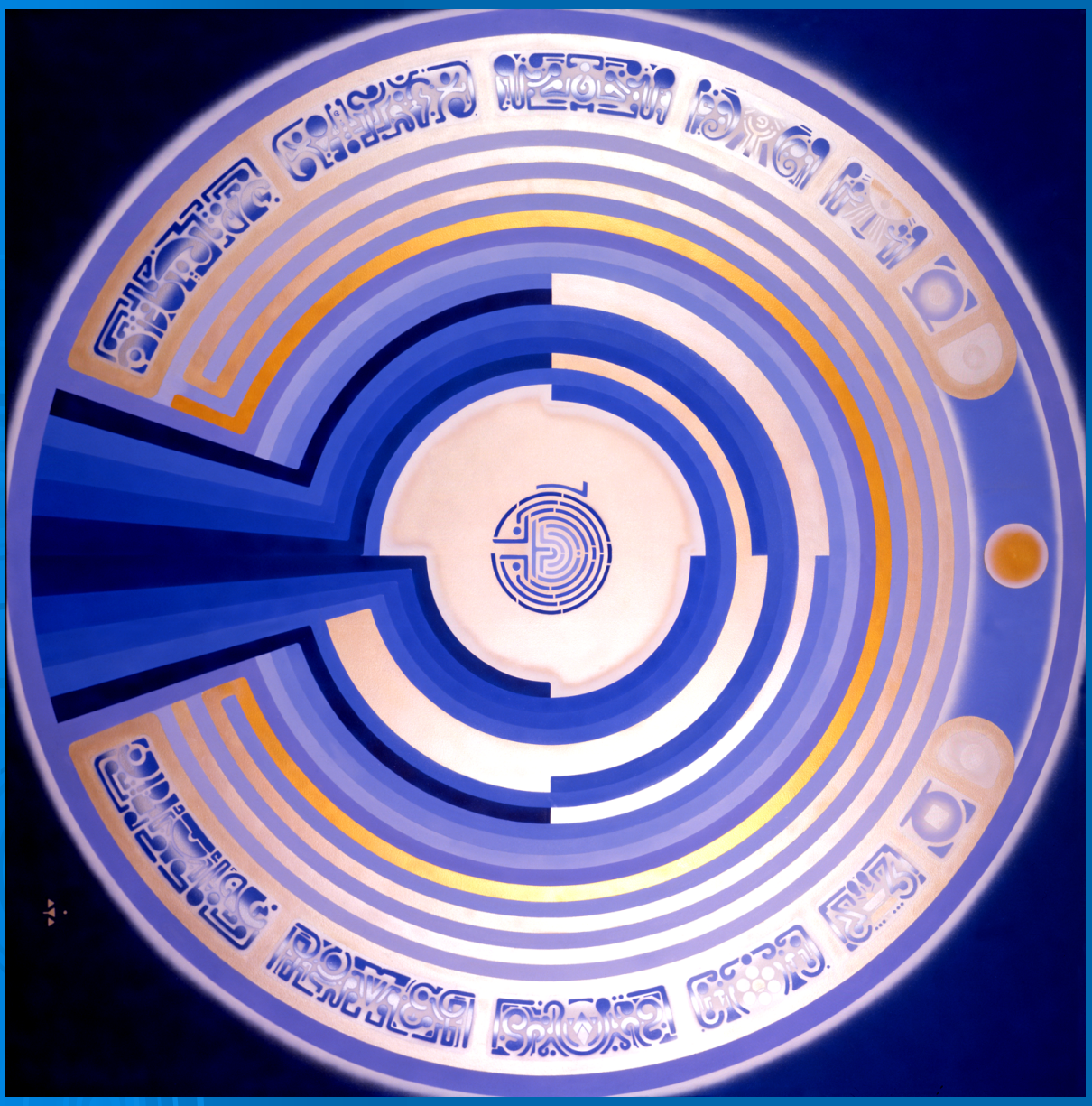
| | | |
|---|---|---|
| SG 301 | Adv I | Golden Cosmos: Planets, Stars & Cosmology |
| SG 302 | Adv II | SG in Art, Culture & Creativity |
| SG 303 | Adv III | Universal Symbols: Primordial Knowledge |
| SG 304 | Adv IV | Labyrinths: a Mini-Pilgrimage to Self |
| SG 305 | Adv V | Mandalas & Yantras: Sacred Vortices |
| SG 306 | Adv VI | Languages & Gematrias: Sacred Communication |
| SG 307 | Adv VII | Sacred Geometry in the Healing Arts |
| SG 308 | Adv VIII | Harmony on Earth: Science & Consciousness of Harmony |

*Upon completion of each level (Introductory, Intermediate & Advanced), a Certificate of Graduation from the Sedona School of Sacred Geometry will be presented to Certification Students.*

*Postgraduate seminars on current Sacred Geometry research, discoveries & updates will be organized in harmonic time.*

*Questions:* phi@schoolofsacredgeometry.org

# SG304A.Ce StarWheel Blessing



SW#67. "Ka-Ur". www.starwheels.com

# SG304A.Cf
# Contact Info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www.starwheels.com/infopage.php?pagename=starwheelgallery
aya@starwheels.com


**Our non-profit: www.starwheelfoundation.org**
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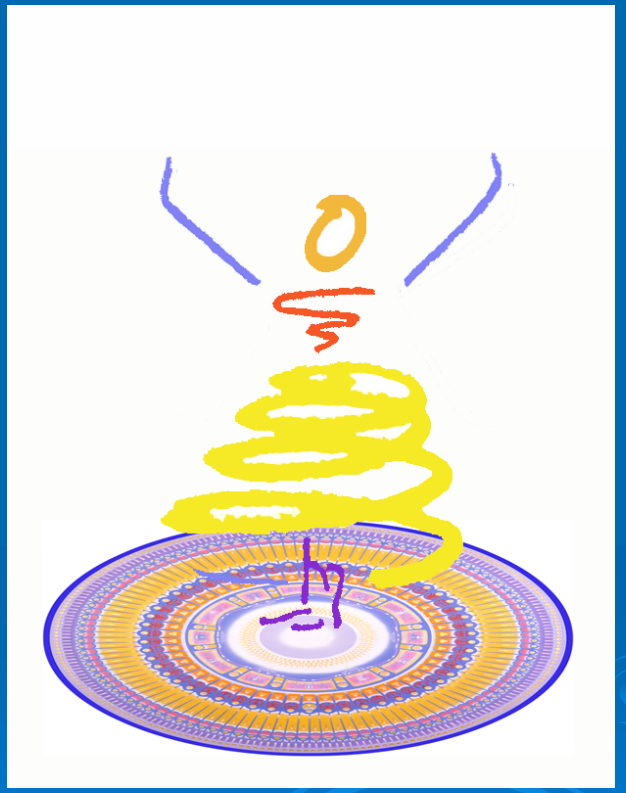
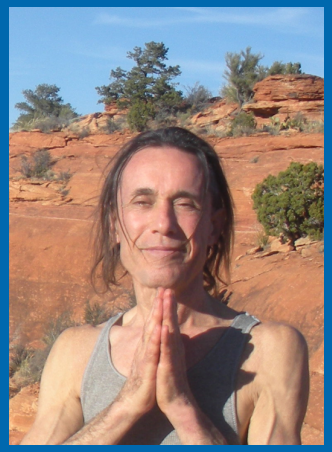
**On Facebook: Aya Sheevaya**
**FB Group: Sedona School of Sacred Geometry**



Φ celebration



## SG304A.Cg About Aya

A native of France, Aya is a visionary artist and celebration yogi who has dedicated his life to serve humanity and to develop sacred arts education. In his late 20's, Aya realized that his professional life in the French diplomatic service was not fulfilling his heart's desires; he quit everything to go on an extended vision quest. His path took him around the world to visit a variety of sacred sites & cultures and to receive inspiration from many teachers.

In 1985, in Santa Monica, CA, Aya was gifted with a spiritual vision prompting him to create a series of 108 airbrushed neo-mandala paintings: the "StarWheels". The StarWheels, a happy family of vibratory flowers for the Earth, are looking for sacred spaces to be graced with their presence... (www.starwheels.com / www.starwheelmandalas.com)

Moving to Sedona, Arizona, in 1997, Aya has been involved with sacred arts classes & events, mandala creation, Sedona guided tours, labyrinth making and Sacred Geometry teaching. Aya has presented several StarWheel art exhibits, has sponsored community awareness events at the Sedona Library, has developed, in collaboration with Gardens for Humanity, the Peace Garden arboretum at the Sedona Creative Life Center, was a speaker at the Sacred Geometry Conference (Sedona, 2004), co-designed several labyrinth sites (The Lodge at Sedona, Mago's Ranch...), and was on the management team of the Raw Spirit Festival in 2006 - 2008.

Realizing that Sedona was progressively becoming a global spiritual university for many seekers from around the world, Aya founded in 2005 the Sedona School of Sacred Geometry. The school is offering online access to Sacred Geometry PDF modules, with 17 modules completed so far. In the school's website, Aya states: *"We are living at the extraordinary and exciting times of a global transformation to a higher order of human consciousness... Sacred Geometry is the expression and resurrection of our deep innate wisdom, now awakening from a long sleep: seeing again the all-encompassing, fractal-holographic unity of nature, life and spirit... The keyword is HARMONY."* (www.schoolofsacredgeometry.org)

Aya's visionary dream, supported by his non-profit educational organization, the StarWheel Foundation, is the co-creation of an international eco-village "The School of Celebratory Arts" - a green, tropical environment encouraging young people of all nations to develop their creative consciousness and thus contribute to a renewed, spirited, life-respecting global civilization on Earth. (www.starwheelfoundation.org).

Since 2012, Aya is dancing the body divine, after his re-discovery of Yoga, Partner Yoga and AcroYoga. Aya is currently the AcroYoga.org Jam coordinator for Sedona and a teacher of yoga swing asanas.

Blessings in Anjali!