

OSHUN and the ORISHA



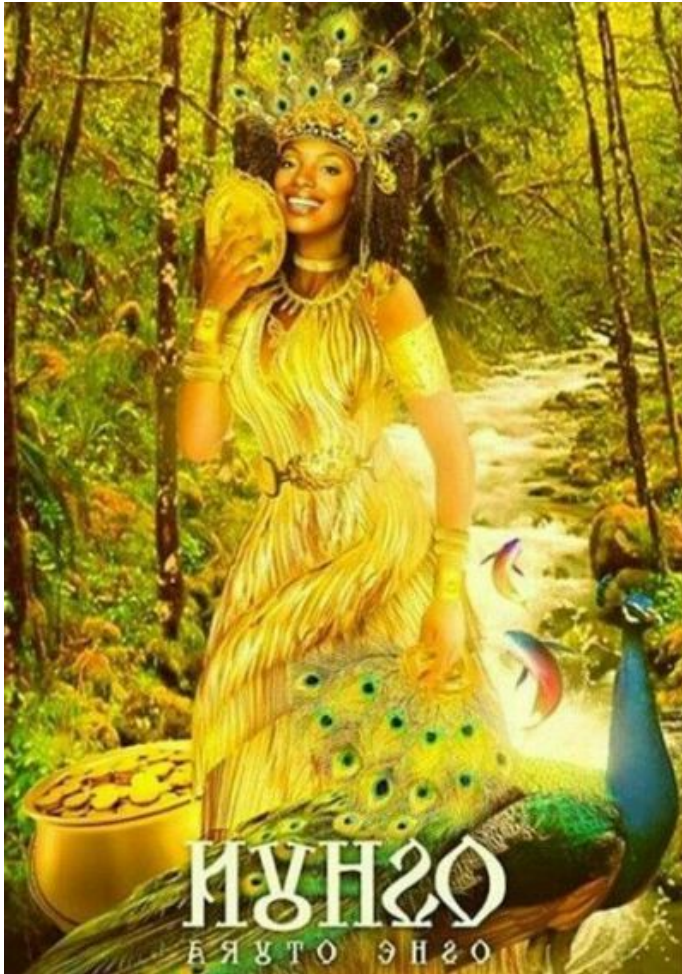
Originated in Nigeria, West Africa, the Orisha are the African gods, that are part of the Yoruba religion. Developed among the people of Nigeria and Benin, the Yoruba faith consists of ritual celebrations that include singing and dancing and spiritual/ healing ceremonies.

The gods travelled with African people who were stolen as slaves, from Africa and brought to the new world, and it is said that the day we are born, each of us are accompanied by an *Orisha*, or "owner of our being," who serves as our lifelong protector.

In the United States, Latin America, and the Caribbean, seven of the many Orishas are referred to as "The Seven African Powers;" that

represent the seven tribes of Africa. Amongst these powers are Eleggua, (lord of the crossroads); Obatala, (the sky father, creator of human); Yemaya, (mother of the ocean); Oya, (orisha of the winds) Oshun, (goddess of love and beauty); Shango, (god of thunder) and Ogun, (deity of warriors.)

It's said that we share personality traits with the Orisha, who ultimately helps us learn more about ourselves, in order to lead an effective life.



OSHUN (goddess of Love and Beauty)



YEMAYA (goddess of the ocean)

OSHUN, the goddess of love, beauty, and fertility. She is the youngest Orisha and one of the most adored in the Yoruba religion. According to the *patakis* (sacred stories left to us by our ancestors), Oshun was brought into existence by Olodumare, the Supreme Creator, once he realized something crucial was missing after creating the earth: sweetness and love. One of the ancient Yoruba myths suggest that the human race would not exist if Oshun had not been sent to our world, because it is said that her sweet and fertile waters brought life back to humanity.

Oshun exudes sensuality and all the qualities associated with fresh, flowing river waters, and her sparkling charisma can light up a room, as her lush womanly figure suggests fertility and sensuality.



Oshun's favorite thing to eat is honey, and her contagious laugh can either put you under her spell or send shivers down your spine... And despite her generosity and irresistible charm, this Orisha is also the most dangerous when crossed—Oshun is as sweet as honey, but her honey can also turn sour.

What's interesting about this goddess is that beneath her charming beauty and loquacious demeanor, there is a feeling of sadness and loneliness. The patakís say Oshun is often heartbroken because she loves with every fiber of her being, and yet she never finds someone who can love her the same way back.



Oshun is an extremely beautiful woman dressed in gold and covered in jewels with a pot of honey around her waist. Her traditional colors are yellow, gold, coral, amber, and she's

associated with the number five. Oshun often carries a mirror so that she can admire her beauty. She loves honey, sunflowers, oranges, cinnamon, and pumpkin, and her favorite birds are peacocks and vultures. Today the Orisha traditions are practiced in Cuba, Brazil, and parts of Central America and the United States.



