

## WHAT IS A CYPHER WHEEL?

The Cypher Wheel is a beautiful hand crafted work, made from native lumber, painstakingly hewn into a fine piece of art that would look great displayed in the home along with your prized art and furniture. But more than that, the Cypher Wheel is a functional coding and decoding device. Leon Battista Alberti, a renaissance man on the order of Leonardo DiVinci, invented the Cypher Wheel, in the 1400's. The Alberti disk had only two wheels with two alphabets, where as the new "Cypher Wheel" has three wheels with eight lines of alphabet.

The Cypher Wheel can be used to decode the clues on your next adventure treasure hunt, or the wheel can be employed as a tool for masking the secret ingredients of your latest alchemy project. Codes have long been used to hide from prying eyes the contents of concoctions and potions that are to remain in the possession of their owners. The Cypher Wheel would be a great addition to your costume or an addition to your trappings at the next renaissance festival. Or, if you choose, the Cypher Wheel will be a prize just as a conversation piece or an ornament for your home.

Using the simplest technique, here's how it works. Let's say you want to write a note of confidential nature to a friend. If you are writing in the English language you will use common Modern Latin. There are two lines of Modern Latin, one on the inside of the first, or stationary ring, and one on the outside of the second ring. Notice the numbers around the edge of the second ring. To make a coded note you simply rotate the second ring to a number of your choice and keep it in place. Let's say you choose number 13. Just rotate the second ring to align the number 13 with the arrow on the outside ring. Now for example, if you want to spell "CAT", find C on the outside ring, and look at the letter adjacent to the C on the second ring, that is an O and write it down on a piece of paper. Next find A on the outside ring and look to find the adjacent M on the second ring. Then find T on the outer ring and the adjacent F on the second ring. That gives you OMF. Now the receiver of your note will use another identical Cypher Wheel to decode your message and all the receiver needs to know is the selected number setting, in this case 13, for him/her to decode CAT. He would set the number 13 to the arrow on the outside wheel and find the letter O on the second ring and write down the corresponding C on the outer ring. Then the M and F in a similar manner to form the word CAT. And the code is "deciphered". Whole letters of correspondence can be done this way to have secret conversations.

The other alphabets and rings can be used in much the same way in any numerical setting or various combinations and can be deciphered as long as the receiver knows the proper settings for decoding. Or, the rings can be set in the #1 setting and the foreign alphabets can simply be used in place of the corresponding Modern Latin letters as a replacement code.

You'll get hours of entertainment from your "Cypher Wheel."