

Arthurian Legends

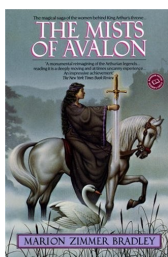


Sir Gawain and the Green Knight by anonymous

When a mysterious green knight rides into King Arthur's court, interrupting a New Year's feast, he issues a challenge: if any of King Arthur's men can behead him and he survives, then a year later he is entitled to return the strike. Sir Gawain takes up the challenge and decapitates the green knight, only to see him pick up his severed head and ride away, leaving Gawain to seek him out to fulfill their pact.

The Dragon Queen by Alice Borchardt

The daughter of a powerful pagan queen, Guinevere grows up under the protection of a Druid and a shapeshifting man-wolf, until the sorcerer Merlin forces her to fulfill her destiny as Arthur's queen. Also try The Raven Warrior.

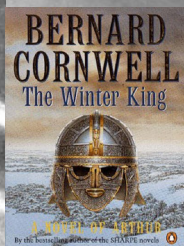


The Mists of Avalon by Marion Zimmer Bradley

Explore the Arthurian legend from the perspective of the woman who is frequently portrayed as one of Arthur's antagonists. Bradley's retelling – primarily through the eyes of Morgaine, Arthur's half-sister – is rich in detail and complete in scope. The story begins with Igraine (Arthur's mother) and ends soon after Arthur's death. Bradley paints a Britain that is divided between old and new religions, diverse cultures, and clashing kings. For fantasy lovers who enjoy rich, realistic worlds and strong, believable magic, this book is extraordinarily satisfying. Also try the rest of Bradley's Avalon series.

The Forever King by Molly Cochran

Set in modern and medieval times, here is the story of the return of King Arthur – as a 10-year-old boy here in the United States – and his greatest enemy, Saladin, a powerful, almost immortal sorcerer, whose goal is to wrest the Holy Grail from the boy. Cochran's *King Arthur trilogy* continues with: The Broken Sword and The Third Magic.

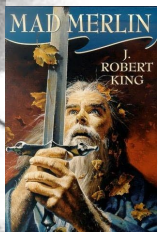


The Winter King by Bernard Cornwell

This Arthurian tale, filled with politics and war, is told from the mind of Derfel, one of Merlin's underlings. Arthur keeps back the invading Saxons during the sixth century while dealing with his scheming wife, Guinevere, the manipulative Merlin, and the cowardly Lancelot. Also try Enemy of God and Excalibur.

Knight Life by Peter David

A New York mayoral election takes an unexpected turn when a new, independent candidate appears on the scene, running on a platform of common sense, humor, and knightly virtues. Assisted by his advisers, a 10-year-old boy genius named Merlin, an immortal accountant known as Percival, and a troubled young woman called Gwen, the newcomer, Arthur Penn, proceeds to take the town by storm—until the arrival of a pair of old enemies threatens to re-create the tragedy of the Arthurian legend. Also try One Knight Only.



Mad Merlin by J. Robert King

The story of Merlin begins well before young Arthur's birth. The trouble is that Mad Merlin, as he is known, can't quite remember exactly where or when his own story does begin. This is a fun and unique take on the story of Arthur's wizard and the first in a trilogy. Also try Lancelot Du Lethe and Le Morte D'Avalon.

Gwenhwyfar: The White Spirit by Mercedes Lackey

Gwenhwyfar moves in a world where gods walk among their pagan worshipers. When called upon to serve another purpose by the Ladies of the Well, she bows to circumstances to become Arthur's queen-only to find herself facing temptation and treachery, intrigue and betrayal, but also love and redemption.

Taliesin by Stephen Lawhead

While the druids of the Isle of the Mighty predict the coming of one whose song will change the world, a young priestess in Atlantis foresees the destruction of her homeland. The love story of the bard Taliesin and the Princess Charis is a graceful combination of Atlantean legend, Celtic myth, and Christian message that begins the Pendragon Cycle; which continues with Merlin.

Le Morte D'Arthur by Thomas Malory

Edited and first published by William Caxton in 1485, Sir Thomas Malory's unique and splendid version of the Arthurian legend tells an immortal story of love, adventure, chivalry, treachery, and death.

The Last Companion by Patrick McCormack

Ten years after Arthur's death, Britain is falling into chaos, a band of Irish raiders has shown up searching for the chalice the King took from the Western Isles, and Arthur's onetime companion Budoc must stop them from finding it.

Guenevere: Queen of the Summer Country by Rosalind Miles

A feminist retelling of the Arthurian legend is seen through the eyes of its heroine, Queen Guenevere, who is courageous and beautiful even when she is forced to choose between her king and the noble knight Sir Lancelot. Also try the other Guenevere novels: Knight of the Sacred Lake and Child of the Holy Grail.

Guardian of the Balance by Irene Radford

This epic set in the magical time of King Arthur follows Merlin as he forsakes the old values and gives in to temptation at the Beltane festival. His daughter Wren is conceived, and Wren, blessed with the powers of ancient magic, must face an unimaginable evil to save Merlin, Arthur, and their world. Also try the rest of Merlin's Descendants continuing with Guardian of the Trust.

The Crystal Cave by Mary Stewart

This complex novel filled with history, politics and adventure focuses on Merlin's early life. He spends his childhood in the court of his grandfather, the King of Wales, where he keeps secret his ability of "second sight." Also try Stewart's other classics: The Hollow Hills, The Last Enchantment and The Wicked Day.

A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court by Mark Twain

Cracked on the head by a crowbar in 19th-century Connecticut, Hank Morgan wakes to find himself in King Arthur's England. Branded by Twain's aptitude for broad comedy and biting social satire, the grim truths of Twain's Camelot – fear, injustice, ignorance – resound as clearly now as when it was written.

The Once and Future King by T.H. White

The fantasy classic by which others are judged. This is a novel about Camelot covering Arthur's birth and childhood up through the end of his reign. It is the magical epic of King Arthur and his shining Camelot; of Merlin and Owl and Guinevere; of beasts who talk and men who fly, of wizardry and war. It is the book of all things lost and wonderful and sad. Also try The Book of Merlyn.

The Skystone by Jack Whyte

The story of Arthur's great grandfathers in Britain at the time of the fall of the Roman Empire. They work to preserve the best of their culture and in doing so plant the seeds of a legend. Also try the rest of the Camulod Chronicles, which continues with The Singing Sword.