

# ALFHEIM

## "HOME OF THE ELVES"

In Norse mythology, Alfheim is the place where the Vanir god Frej lives and rules together with the elves. Frej, who is Njord's son, received the farm when he was an infant, a so-called tooth gift. He is the god of fertility who ensures good harvests and reproduction among humans and animals. He is invoked as the god of peace and sunshine and rides forward on his boar-crazed Golden Bristle or sails his ship Skidbladner, which always has the wind in its sails.

One day Frej scouted out over the world and into Jotunheim where his eyes were fixed on the attractive Gerd - daughter of the giants Gymer and Aurboda. Frey sent his servant Skirner with gifts—eleven golden apples and a golden ring—to propose. The initially reluctant Gerd finally gave in and married Frej.

They had a son, Fjölner who became neither a god nor a giant, but human, and the first king in Ynglinga Saga who is not a god. Fjölner established his headquarters in Uppsala where Frej donated all his wealth. Here the peace of Frode began, and there was a good year's growth throughout Svitjod, the land of the Svears. Frey was honored and he was worshiped more than other gods. Through peace and good harvests, people in the area became richer and this continued if people worshiped and sacrificed to him.

The cult around Frej was widespread and was greatest in eastern Sweden and around Lake Mälaren. Part of the cult involved the sacrifice and eating of pigs, which may be the origin of our own tradition of Christmas ham. Frej was also called Frö, Ing, and Yngve.