

Hi all,

I'd like to add few to things regarding the pentatonic tuning referred to as Mode 5 Celtic. The use of the word "mode", in this instance (as I've learned from Lew Paxton Price) simply means "starting point". If you have a keyboard handy, find C# (a black key, for those who are unfamiliar) and moving to the right, play each subsequent black key, until arriving at the next C#, exactly one octave from where you started. You have just demonstrated the Mode 5 Celtic scale. If you note the musical intervals or steps between the black keys you have just played, from C# to C#, you will find them to be 1.0, 1.5, 1.0, 1.0 & 1.5 respectively. We can transpose this pattern of intervals/steps to any key as long as we maintain the pattern. The reason we used C# in the above example is because we are interested in the pattern of intervals represented as we go from C# to C# , playing only the black keys. The notes that would be played in this progression are C#, Eb, F#, G#, Bb & C#. If we would like to have a Mode 5 Celtic tuned flute in the key of F, the notes would be F, G, Bb, C, D & F. We have different notes, but the intervals/steps between each note adheres to the Mode 5 pattern. On Mary Youngblood's second cd, "Heart of the World", the song called "Lady Bug Dance", is played on a Mode 5 Celtic Drone in the key of Mid E made by yours truly. The much loved song "Amazing Grace" can be played with great ease on a flute tuned to this scale. About ten years ago, shortly after taking up the craft of flute making, I first experimented with this tuning which was then only referred to as Mode 5, with the term Celtic being added later. Our beloved adventurous Mary, was immediately enamored with this new scale began composing on the spot. Later, upon reading the instructions provided with Lew Price's "Flute Design Program", I discovered the following quote, "Mode 5 is common in the Keltic music tradition." Subsequently, I began referring to Mode 5 as Celtic or Mode 5 Celtic. It is my understanding (which is far from complete), that Mode 5 Celtic is a minor tuning due to its being a pentatonic scale (pentatonic meaning 5 notes with the sixth note being an octave above the starting note). Okey dokey, time to quit typing and get to flute making. Blessings, Russ