In the Time of King Arthur

Arthurian legend refers to a body of medieval literature whose principal subject is the exploits of Arthur, a sixth century British king who fought to protect Britain from fierce Germanic tribes. Originally concerned with the history of Arthur and the "Matter of Britain," the legend developed into a more literary than purely historic form during the Middle Ages, incorporating elements of Celtic myth and medieval chivalry. By the twelfth century, Arthurian legend had become established in the literature of France, Germany, Italy, and other countries resulting in a great diversity of Arthurian characters, themes and motifs.

Scholars divide Arthurian legend into two broadly overlapping domains, the "pseudo-historical Arthur" and Arthurian romance. The historical aspect of Arthurian legend developed chiefly in the British Isles. There Arthur's name is mentioned in conjunction with a number of battles in chronicles and poems that elaborate on the theme of Arthur as a heroic warrior king. Many latter chronicles that present a glorified portrayal of Arthur transgress historical fact, but in so doing, introduce new motifs such as the Isle of Avalon, the figure of Merlin, and the sword Excalibur.

The flowering of Arthurian romance occurred in France during the late twelfth century. The numerous verse romances consolidate many of the legend's best known features: the romance of Lancelot and Guinevere, Sir Gawain as a model of noble conduct, and the quest for the mysterious Holy Grail. These romances shifted attention away from Arthur toward his illustrious knights of the round table. By the thirteenth century, Arthurian romances shift the treatment of the material from verse to prose.

Arthurian legend itself continues to resonate within Western culture, representing adventure, tragedy, and idealism embodied by the code of chivalry.

Source: Classical and Medieval Literature Criticism, Volume 10

T. A. Barron. The Lost Years of Merlin. 1996.
Young Emrys knows that there are mysteries surrounding his past and he goes on a quest to find answers. Struggling with fearful powers that he does not understand, Emrys journeys to the enchanted land of Fincairn where he befriends Rhia, Shim and a merlin bird named Trouble. Can Emrys discover his past and savey his future? (Young Adult)

Lancelot du Lac, Knight of the Round Table, and the Lady Sabra, incarnation of the Goddess -- two vampires whose duty it was to protect King Arthur. But now it's the 1990's, and Lancelot is an anti-terrorist consultant to the Canadian government. His duty now is not just to a king, but to the entire human race as he races to find the Holy Grail and save the world.

When 10-year-old Arthur Blessing finds an odd, bowl-shaped object in the streets of Chicago, he knows he has found a treasure, but has no way of knowing that he has found the Holy Grail. Unfortunately, a mysterious and ruthless killer, an ancient enemy to Arthur, knows that he has it and will do anything to retrieve it. A mysterious old man named Bertram Taliesin and an alcoholic, ex-FBI agent (who happens to be the reincarnation of Galahad) are the only people standing between young Arthur and the immoral Saladin.

You think you know Merlin? Think again. Take a new look at the greatest of Druids through the eyes of today's best storytellers. Diana L. Paxson, Charles de Lint, Andre Norton, Jane Yolen and 16 others spin their tales for you, some traditional, others contemporary and some even in futuristic settings.

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In this collection of short stories, Matthews shares the less familiar tales of King Arthur and his knights. This collection includes previously untranslated works and is written for contemporary audiences, both adults and children.

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Anne McCaffrey. **Black Horses for the King.** 1996.

A young boy comes of age in King Arthur’s England as he learns the ways of horses and the new craft of horseshoeing, This skill will play an important part in Arthur’s defeat of the Saxons. (Young Adult)

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Nancy Springer. **I am Mordred.** 1998.

This is a compelling story of Mordred. Fated to kill his father, King Arthur when all that he wanted was to be loved by him. It’s a tale that would resonate with anyone who has grappled with emotional conflict. (Young Adult)

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*The Road to Camlann* is the final book of Rosmary Sutcliff's Arthurian trilogy and deals with the death of Arthur and the end of his Round Table. The author recreates the epic and tragic story of the last years of Camelot, bringing to a fitting conclusion her magnificent retellings of the Arthurian legends. Other books in the trilogy: *The Light Beyond the Forest: The Quest for the Holy Grail* (1979), *The Sword and the Circle: King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table* (1981). (Children)

Book 6 of the Camulod Chronicles continues Jack Whyte's original yet believable, exploration of the legend of Camelot. Series fans will love the slow recreation of the decades surrounding the Roman abandonment of Britain with its dense historical details and large cast of fully-developed and sympathetic characters. In this volume, Romano-British Arthur comes of age and assumes his role as a Christian King, ready to fight off marauding Saxons and Danes.

Persia Woolley. **Child of the Northern Spring.** 1987.

In this tale of Arthurian legend, told from Guinevere's perspective, we are drawn into the mythical world of old gods, pagans, Druids, and Christians. Guinevere’s and Arthur's journeys to the coronation as High King and Queen are beautifully drawn in the interweaving of mythical and historical interpretation. Other titles in the trilogy: *Queen of the Summer Stars* (1990), *Guinevere: The Legend in Autumn* (1991).