

New Year celebrations in different countries

USA



Uncorking champagne, gorging on cakes, and feasting on black-eyed beans are considered lucky and festive. The best in fashion is what party-goers opt for in New Year Eve parties. Honking vehicles, paper blowers, noisy whistles, impulsive kisses are all part of the fun and gaiety.

Football tournament is telecast all across the country, and many Americans prefer to enjoy a relaxed New Years Eve watching the game with friends and family – a tradition continuing since 1916.

The most celebrated event is perhaps the “ball drop” in Times Square, New York. Since 1907, every New Year’s Eve a specially designed ball is dropped at 1159pm EST amidst cheers of millions of spectators. The fun is further enhanced by innumerable parties alongside, some even hosted by celebrities.

The capital city of Washington DC adheres to more traditional celebrations. Open House parties have been huge hit since its introduction by the president. Firecrackers are burnt to symbolize warding off evil and negativity.

UK



United Kingdom welcomes the New Year in accordance with the Gregorian calendar with loud cheer, warmth of family and friends, feasting and drinking. In London, a huge crowd gathers along the Thames to enjoy the fireworks from the London Eye as the Big Ben strikes twelve officially marking the onset of a New Year. Thousands of people also assemble to party and make merry with bon-fires at Trafalgar Square and the Piccadilly Circus. Voices in unison honor the “days gone by” by singing “Auld Lang Syne”.

Another traditional custom is “First Footing”. For this, a tall, handsome dark (haired) male has to be the first visitor of a household after midnight. As a custom, he has to carry with him, a loaf of bread, a bottle of whiskey, some coal and salt. He is expected to put the coal in the fire and serve the bread and the drink to the family and wish them Happy New Year. He makes entry from the front door, and after the ritual, he has to exit from the backdoor. He is considered to bring good luck and prosperity to the household.

China



Traditionally, the Chinese follow the Lunar Calendar. According to it, their New Year, known as “Yuan Tan” may occur any day between mid-January and mid-February. The Chinese celebrate their New Year with much pomp and grandeur and the celebrations may continue for ten to fifteen days.

Chinese New Year celebrations are colorful and noisy – red dominates the show, while beating of drums and cymbals are believed to drive away the evil. Lion Dance and feasting take care of the entertainment. Hundreds of lanterns are lit to welcome home the positive vibes. Friends and relatives visit each other. Gift of red envelope containing money (Lai See) is exchanged as a symbol of good luck.

Denmark



People in Denmark believe that if they stand on a chair and jump from it as the clock strikes twelve to welcome New Year, it would bring them luck. Another tradition is to collect dishes all the year around and throw them at the front door on the New Year's Eve – the more the broken plates, the more friends one shall have in the New Year.

Greece



January 1 is an auspicious day for the Greeks as it also marks St. Basil's Day since St. Basil is considered as one of the forefathers. Greek families get together to bake a special bread for the New Year. They hide a coin in the dough. The coin is believed to bring good luck.

Brazil



Apart from hosting some of the best beach-style parties, New Year in Brazil is welcomed with some traditional rituals. The New Year in Brazil coincides with the feast of Lemenja, the African Goddess of the Sea. On New Year's Eve, the Copacabana beach in Rio de Janeiro is lit up with candles. Huge crowd gathers in the bridge and people throw offerings into the sea.

Australia



Australia celebrated New Year with parties, lighting, fireworks and feasting. Sydney Harbor is famed for hosting such celebrations. Loud, noisy, colorful and merry are what would describe Australian New Year celebrations.

Germany



The Germans drop molten lead into cold water to see what shape it takes, and predict the future, each shape symbolizing an aspect of life – love, prosperity etc. Families get together for meals at midnight with some bits left behind as good omen ensuring abundance in the coming year.

Questions:

In which country...

1. do people celebrate with fireworks and feasting?
2. has some beach-style parties?
3. do people drop molten lead into cold water?
4. do people watch football matches?
5. do people hide a coin in the dough?
6. do the celebrations continue for ten to fifteen days?
7. has the original custom called „First Footing”?
8. do people stand on a chair and jump from it?

Answer the questions:

1. What does „First Footing” mean?

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2. Does the Sydney Harbour famous? Why?

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3. What is „Lai See” and why is it good?

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4. What happens if you drop molten lead into cold water?

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5. Who is „Lemenja?” Why is she famous?

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6. What is the most celebrated event in the USA?

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7. What do people throw at the front door on the New Year’s Eve in Denmark?

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8. What do Greek families bake and why?

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Write the correct places:

- In the USA, people celebrate here (2 places):
- In the UK people celebrate here (2 places):
- In Brazil people celebrate here:
- In Australia people celebrate here:

Find the suitable definition

1. gorging (to gorge)	a) high respect
2. honor	b) a person, place, company that provides services
3. vibe (vibrating)	c) a general emotional feeling
4. collect	d) a gluttonous meal
5. auspicious	e) overflowing fullness
6. coincide	f) fortunate
7. hosting (to host)	g) to occupy the same place
8. abundance	h) make a collection of sg

Write something about YOUR country's New Year celebrations and traditions: