



# 2021 Holidays from Around the World

This chart outlines holidays celebrated throughout the world for each US Calendar month. Click on the name of a holiday to learn more about it on page 2 and 3.

## January

January (in Latin, *Ianaurius*) is named after Janus, the god of beginnings and transitions in Roman mythology.



Bodhi Day  
World Braille Day

Dia de Reyes, Spain & Latin America

## February

### African American History Month

Chinese New Year and Spring Festival  
Tibetan New Year  
Korean New Year  
Vietnamese New Year



## March

### National Women's History Month Irish-American Heritage Month

Women's Day, Mozambique  
Lailat al Miraj/ The Prophet's Ascension  
Lailat al Bara'a/ Night of Emancipation  
Holi Phagwa



## April

The Romans gave this month the Latin name *Aprillis*, but the derivation of the name is uncertain.

Chakri Memorial Day, Thailand  
Yom Hashoah (Holocaust Remembrance Day), Israel  
Ramadan (Beings)  
National Sovereignty and Children's Day, Turkey

**National Deaf History Month (March 13 - April 15)**



## May

### Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month

Children's Day, South Korea  
Gawai Dyak, Malaysia  
Eid AL Fitr (Ramadan's End)

## June

### LGBTQIA Pride Month

Puerto Rican Day Parade  
Juneteenth



**Bun Bang Fai (Rocket Festival), Laos (April - June)**

## July

Named by the Roman Senate in honor of Julius Cesar, it being the month of his birth.



Canada Day  
Bastille Day, France

## August

Originally the sixth month in the Roman 10-month calendar, August became the eighth month when January and February were added.

Purple Heart Day  
Yulan Festival, China

## September

Enkutatash (Ethiopian New Year)  
Chuseok (Hangawi), Korea



## October

Indigenous People's Day



## November

### Jewish American Heritage Month National Native American Heritage Month

Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead), Mexico  
Bon Om Touk, Cambodia  
Diwali, North India



## December

### Universal Human Rights Month

Noche Buena (Christmas Eve), Latin America  
Boxing Day, United Kingdom  
Hogmanay, Scotland  
Kwanzaa



**Hanukkah (Nov 28-Dec 6)**



## **January**

**Jan 2 Bodhi Day** - A Buddhist holiday that commemorates the day that the historical Buddha, Siddhartha Gautama, experienced enlightenment.

**Jan 4 World Braille Day** - In celebration of Louis Braille, and a reminder of the importance of independence for people who are blind or visually impaired.

**Jan 6 Dia de Reyes** - Celebrates the Three Wise Men's visit to see Christ through the exchanging of gifts.

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## **February**

**Feb 12 Chinese New Year/Spring Festival (Year of the Ox)** - Marked by a Chinese Festival that celebrates the beginning of a new year on the traditional Chinese Calendar. Associated with several myths and customs, traditionally a time to honor deities as well as ancestors.

**Feb 12-14 Losar (Tibetan New Year)** - Celebrated on the first day of the lunisolar Tibetan calendar. Involves rituals of gratitude, offerings to the nagas (the water spirits), and smoke offerings to local spirits.

**Feb 12 Korean New Year** - The first day of the Korean Calendar, a traditional Korean Holiday that usually lasts three days. Many visit family, perform ancestral rites, eat traditional food, and play folk games.

**Feb 12 Tết (Vietnamese New Year)** - The name Tet comes from the phrase 'Feast of the First Morning of the First Day'. Customs include ancestral worship, giving lucky money to children and the elderly, and cooking special holiday foods.

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## **March**

**Mar 7 Women's Day, Mozambique**- Marks the anniversary of Josina Mthembu Machel's death, a key figure in the struggle for the emancipation of African Women.

**Mar 11 Lailat al Miraj/ The Prophet's Ascension** - Commemorates the Prophet Muhammed's nighttime journey from Mecca to the 'Farthest Mosque' in Jerusalem where he ascended to heaven, was purified, and given the instruction for Muslims to pray five times daily.

**Mar 28 Lailat al Bara'a/ Night of Emancipation** - In the Shia view, this is the date when Imam al-Mahdi was born, an important Islamic figure who is believed to bring absolute justice to the world by establishing Islam as the global religion.

**Mar 28-29 Holi Phagwa** - An ancient Hindu festival also known as the Indian 'festival of spring', 'festival of colours', and 'festival of love'. Signifies the triumph of good over evil.

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## **April**

**Apr 6 Chakri Memorial Day, Thailand**- Commemorates the establishment of the Chakri Dynasty and the founding of Bangkok by King Phutthayotfa Chulalok.

**Apr 8 Yom Hashoah, Israel**- Israel's Holocaust Remembrance Day, marked across the country every year as a day of remembrance.

**Apr 12 Start of Ramadan** - In the ninth month in the Islamic calendar, the Quran was revealed to the Islamic prophet Muhammad. Strict fasting is observed from sunrise to sunset, and the days are used as a time for spiritual reflection, self-improvement, and heightened devotion and worship.

**Apr 23 National Sovereignty and Children's Day, Turkey** - Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, founder of the Turkish Republic, presented April 23 to the world's children to emphasize that they are the successors of the future. Children's day celebrations often take place outdoors, with schools participating in week-long ceremonies.

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## **May**

**May 5 Children's Day, South Korea** - Honors the Liberation of Hungary from the Nazi Germany during the Siege of Budapest and the broader Budapest Offensive by the Soviet Red Army. Remembrance for Soviet Soldiers who fell

**May 11 Eid al Fitr, End of Ramadan** - Also called the 'Festival of the Breaking of the Fast'. Marks the end of month long fasting.

**May 20 Gawai Dyak, Malaysia** - Annual festival celebrated in Sarawak, Malaysia. Acknowledges the formation of the Federation of Malaysia.

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**May - June Bung Ban Fai, Laos** Also known as the Rocket Festival, this merit-making ceremony traditionally practiced by the Lao people and takes place before planting season. Based on the notion that launching bamboo rockets will initiate the rainy season to bring much water to the country's rice fields.

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## **June**

**Jun 13 National Puerto Rican Day Parade**- Takes place annually in the US along Fifth Avenue and the Manhattan borough of New York. Held in honor of the 3.2 million inhabitants of Puerto Rico, and all people of Puerto Rican birth or heritage in the US.

**Jun 19 Juneteenth** - Observed as a public holiday in 14 states. Honors the day in 1865 when slaves in Texas and Louisiana heard that they were free, two full months after the civil war. Official state holiday in Texas.

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## **July**

**Jul 1 Canada Day** - Celebrates the anniversary of Canadian confederation, the passing of the Constitution Act of 1867. Celebrated in the form of organized events, parades, festivals and carnivals.

**Jul 14 Bastille Day, France** - Also called la Fête nationale (meaning 'The National Celebration') or known as the national day of France. Commemorated with a parade held on the Champs-Élysées in Paris, reported as the oldest and largest military parade in Europe.



## **August**

**Aug 7 Purple Heart Day** - A purple heart is presented to soldiers who were killed or injured while serving in the US military. This is a day where Americans can remember and honor the brave men and women who were in battle.

**Aug 7 Yulan Festival, China** - Also known as the Ghost Festival, or Ghost Day. In Chinese culture, the fifteenth day of the seventh month in the lunar calendar is called Ghost Day, where ghosts and spirits come out from 'the lower realm'. The realms of Heaven and Hell and the realms of the living are open.

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## **September**

**Sep 11 Enkutatash (Ethiopian New Year)** - Occurs on Meskerem 1 on the Ethiopian calendar. Marks the approximate end of the 'rainy' season.

**Sep 20-22 Chuseok (Hangawi), Korea** - The word comes from the archaic Korean and means "The Great Middle of Autumn". A harvest festival held at the end of summer or early autumn. Marked by feasts and ancestral memorial services in homes and at burial sites.

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## **October**

**Oct 11 Indigenous Peoples Day** - Celebrates and honors Native American Peoples and commemorates their histories and cultures. Began as a counter-celebration held the same day as the US holiday Columbus Day, many rejecting him in regards to the violent history of the colonization.

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## **November**

**Nov 1-2 Dia de los Muertos** - 'The Day of the Dead', a holiday celebrated in Mexico and elsewhere associated with Catholic celebrations of All Saints' Day and All Soul's Day. Involves family and friends getting together to honor and remember loved ones who have died.

**Nov 14 Diwali, India** - Festival of Lights created by Hindus, Jains and Sikhs. Usually lasting 5 days, the festival celebrates the 'victory of light over darkness, good over evil, and knowledge over ignorance'. Includes home decorations, fireworks, shopping, puja (worship ceremonies), gifts, and the performance of religious rituals.

**Nov 18-20 Bon Om Touk Festival, Cambodia** - Also known as the Cambodian Water & Moon Festival. Usually celebrated for three days to mark the end of the country's rainy season. Events include boat races and concerts.

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## **December**

**Dec 24 Noche Buena, Mexico** - The Spanish word for Christmas Eve (translated as 'The Good Night'), in Spain, Latin America, Pacific Islands and the Philippines, the evening consists of a traditional family dinner.

**Dec 26 Boxing Day** - Celebrated after Christmas Day, thus being the second day of what is known as the Christmastide. Originating in the UK, it is also celebrated in a number of colonies that previously formed part of the British Empire. Traditionally a day celebrated by giving money and other gifts to those in need, or in service positions.

**Dec 26-Jan 1 Kwanzaa, US** - An annual celebration of African-American culture, celebrated over seven days and culminating in a feast called Karamu on the 6th day. Created by Dr. Maulana Karenga based on African harvest festival traditions from various parts of Africa.

**Dec 30- Jan 1 Hogmanay, Scotland** - The Scottish word for the last day of the year, synonymous with the celebration of the New Year in the Scottish manner.

# Awareness Months

## **Heritage Months**

Each heritage month celebrates the culture of, and pays tribute to the contributions of a certain cultural group. Varies by month. Learning about, understanding and celebrating the uniqueness of these cultures and contributions is one way to honor and recognize an awareness month.

## **National Women's History Month**

An annual declared month that highlights the contributions of women to events in history and contemporary society. A time to recognize and celebrate women throughout history who have effected change and brought recognition to women workers.

## **National Deaf History Month**

Celebrated from March to April to recognize the contributions of deaf and hard of hearing people. Began in 1996 when two deaf employees at Washington D.C.'s MLK Jr. Memorial Library taught sign language to their colleagues.

## **LGBTQIA Pride Month**

Many pride events are held during this month to recognize the impact LGBTQIA people have had on the world. Celebrated via parties, marches, parades and various events. This awareness month is also recognized internationally as celebrations take place in many other cities at different times, including the months of February, August and September.

## **Universal Human Rights Month**

Recognized as a time for people in the US and around the world to join together and stand up for the rights and dignity of all individuals. December 10th is also recognized as Human Rights Day, a global holiday that marks the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations in 1948.

