

# 365 days in 2017 to celebrate and to connect

January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
1 New Year	1	1 Ash Wednesday	1 April Fool's Day	1 Labor Day/May Day Yom Hazkaron	1 Shavuot	1	1	1 Eid al Adha (Feast of Sacrifice) Anti-war Day	1 Harvest Festival Mid-Autumn Festiv.	1 All Saints' Day Vegan Day	1 Birthday of Proph. Muhammad AIDS Day
2 Berchtoldstag	2 Groundhog Day	2	2	2 Yom Ha'Atzmaut	2	2	2	2	2 D. of Non-Violence Gandhi Jayanti	2	2
3	3	3 World Wildlife Day	3	3 Constitution Day	3	3	3	3	3 German Unity Day	3	3 Day of Persons with Disabilities
4 World Braille Day	4	4	4	4	4 Pentecost	4 Independence Day USA	4	4 Labor Day	4	4	4
5	5	5	5	5 Europe Day	5 Whit Monday Environment Day	5	5	5 Ghost Festival	5 Sukkot (till 12.10.)	5 Guy Fawkes Day	5
6 Epiphany	6	6	6	6 No Diet Day	6	6	6	6	6	6	6 Saint Nicholas
7 Christmas (Julian calendar)	7	7	7 World Health Day	7 Laughter Day	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
8	8	8 International Women's Day	8	8	8	8 Asalha Puja Day	8	8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9 Palm Sunday Mahavir Jayanti	9	9	9	9	9	9	9 Inventors' Day	9
10	10	10	10	10 Visakha Puja (Buddha Day)	10	10	10	10	10 Mental Health Day	10	10 Human Rights Day
11	11 Magha Puja Day	11	11 Passover until 18.4.	11	11 Trinity Sunday/ All Saints	11 World Population Day	11	11 Nayrouz	11	11 St. Martin's Day	11
12	12	12 Purim Holi	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12 Yule Lads
13	13	13	13 Maundy Thursday Songkran until 15.4.	13	13	13	13 Obon (till 15.8.) Lefthanders Day	13 Positive Thinking Day	13	13 Kindness Day	13 Saint Lucy's Day Hanukkah (till 20.12.)
14 Pongal	14 St. Valentine	14 White Day	14 Good Friday Vaisakhi (Sikh New Year)	14 Mother's Day	14	14 Bastille Day	14 Krishna Janmashtami	14	14	14	14
15	15	15	15	15 Day of Families	15 Corpus Christi	15	15 Assumption	15	15	15	15
16 Nothing Day Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	16	16	16 Easter / Pascha	16	16	16	16	16 Oktoberfest (till 3.10.)	16	16 Day for Tolerance	16
17	17	17 World Sleep Day St. Patrick's Day	17	17	17	17 World Day for International Justice	17	17	17 Diwali (till 20.10.)	17	17
18	18	18	18	18	18	18 Mandela Day	18	18	18	18	18
19	19	19 Saint Joseph's Day	19	19	19	19	19 Humanitarian Day	19	19	19 International Men's Day	19
20	20 Presidents' Day Day of Soc. Justice	20 Nowruz, New Year/ Naw Ruz/Norooz	20 Ridvan until 1.5.	20	20	20	20	20 Rosch Hashanah (till 22.9.)	20	20	20
21 Hug Day	21 Mother Language Day	21	21	21 Diversity Day	21 World Music Day	21	21	21 Day of Peace Navratri / Nine Emperor Gods Festival (till 29.9.)	21 Hijri (Islamic New Year)	21	21
22 German-French Day	22 Thinking Day	22	22 Mother Earth Day	22 Biodiversity Day	22	22	22	22	22 Birth of Bahá'u'lláh	22	22
23	23 Fat Thursday	23	23 Children's Day,	23	23	23	23	23	23	23 Thanksgiving	23
24	24	24	24 Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Day)	24	24 St. John's Day Midsummer Day	24	24	24	24	24 Buy Nothing Day	24 Christmas Eve
25	25	25	25	25 Ascension Day Africa Day	25	25	25	25	25	25	25 Christmas (Gregorian calendar)
26	26	26 Daylight Saving Time	26	26	26 Eid al-Fitr (End of Ramadan)	26	26	26 Durga Puja (till 30.9.)	26	26	26
27	27 Rose Monday	27	27 Girls' Day	27 Ramadan	27	27	27	27	27	27	27
28 Chinese New Year	28 Shrove Tuesday	28	28 Arbor Day	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28
29		29	29	29 Memorial Day	29	29	29	29	29 Daylight Saving Time ends	29	29
30		30	30	30	30	30 Day of Friendship	30	30	30	30	30
31		31	31	31 Shavuot	31	31	31 Summer bank holiday (UK)	31	31 Reformation Day Halloween Day of the Dead	31	31 New Year's Eve

Using a (lighter) shade of a color does not necessarily refer to a religion but rather to the culture to which the data belong. For explanation of all days during the year visit [www.consilia-cct.com/veranstaltungen.php](http://www.consilia-cct.com/veranstaltungen.php). Our criteria for the selection of holidays: Meaningful to your international colleagues, clients or friends world wide; or the day is a symbol for consideration of diversity or sustainability, for conciliation or mindfulness. Disclaimer: No responsibility is taken for the correctness of the information in this calendar.

## January

- 1.1. **New Year (Gregorian calendar) (Neujahrstag):** The first day of the year is a bank holiday in almost all countries on all continents. (For a complete list, see: <http://www.gppstudio.net/monthlyholidays/bank-holidays-january-2017.htm>) In some countries you wish "HAPPY NEW YEAR" and bring gifts with various fortune symbols like four-leafed clover, pig, chimney sweeper, lady bug, horseshoe, frogs, fly agaric, yule log, Father Time and Baby New Year, etc. In Canada, USA, Ireland, UK and the Netherlands, people run into the water to celebrate the new year.
- 2.1. **Berchtoldstag (CH)** is an Alemannic holiday, known in Switzerland and Liechtenstein. On Berchtoldstag, around some areas of Zurich, people gather in pubs for „bächeln“. In the afternoon and evening, music-, comedy-, and entertainment groups go from pub to pub to entertain the crowd and in return they are rewarded with Food and Drinks by the hosts. For more traditions and information, please consult: [http://www.feiertagskalender.ch/feiertag.php?geo=3056&jahr=2017&hl=de&klasse=5&ft\\_id=3](http://www.feiertagskalender.ch/feiertag.php?geo=3056&jahr=2017&hl=de&klasse=5&ft_id=3)
- 4.1. Braille is a code that uses bumps and indentation on a surface to represent letters, which can be recognized by touch. **World Braille Day** celebrates the achievements of Braille inventor Louis Braille, a French man who was blinded in an accident at a very young age. This day aims to raise awareness about the challenges faced by blind and visually impaired people.
- 6.1. **Epiphany (Heilige Drei Könige):** According to Christian tradition, three (wise) kings visited Jesus to praise him after his birth. It is a bank holiday in countries with a catholic or orthodox – Christian tradition, such as Austria, Lebanon, Puerto Rico and Russia (for a complete list, see: <http://www.gppstudio.net/monthlyholidays/bank-holidays-january-2017.htm>). In some countries children get their Christmas gifts at this day to remember that the kings bore gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. In catholic tradition in Germany, homes are blessed for the new year by children dressed as the three wise kings who sing (Sternsänger).
- 6.1. **Christmas Eve (Julian calendar):** Eastern Orthodox national churches, including those of Russia, Georgia, Ukraine, Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia, celebrate Christmas according to the older Julian calendar. In Serbia for example, a large part of the population celebrates "Serbian New Year", according to the Julian calendar. If you want to send your wishes, send a Christmas card.
- 13.-16.1. **Pongal** is a harvest festival celebrated by the Tamils in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu and the Indian Union Territory of Puducherry and Sri Lanka. It is celebrated with much enthusiasm, quite like Thanksgiving in America. The most important part of the Pongal festival is cooking the Pongal dish. Venpongal is made with rice mixed with moong daal, and cooked with ghee, cashew nuts, raisins, and spices. For good wishes, people send Pongal Cards with the symbol of cattle adorned with bells and a message for a happy Harvest. ([www.pongalfestival.org/pongal-cards.html](http://www.pongalfestival.org/pongal-cards.html))
- 16.1. **National nothing day**, in the USA, is quite simply... a day for nothing. It was created in 1973 by newspaperman Harold Pullman Coffin. He wanted to give Americans a day on which they can sit around, without celebrating, observing or honoring anything. The expectation is that people do nothing, and especially do not create or otherwise promote this day. If someone has to do something (i.e. work) on this day, that person can at least think about the possibility of doing nothing. And, to say anything more would contradict the purpose of this day.
- 16.1. **Martin Luther King, Jr. Day** is a federal holiday in the USA marking the birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. It is observed on the third Monday of January each year, which is around the time of King's birthday, January 15. It honors King, who was the chief spokesman for nonviolent activism in the civil rights movement, which successfully protested against racial discrimination in federal and state law. Many Americans serve their neighbors and communities on this holiday. (For more info, see <http://www.nationalservice.gov/mlkday>)
- 21.1. **National Hug Day (USA)** is an annual holiday created by Rev. Kevin Zaborney. The purpose for the holiday is to encourage everyone to hug family and friends more often. It has gained popularity in Canada, Germany, Bulgaria, Guam, Australia, Georgia, England, and Russia.
- 22.1. **German-French Day (Deutsch-Französischer Tag):** On the 22.1.1963, Charles de Gaulle and Konrad Adenauer signed the Élysée Treaty also known as the Treaty of Friendship in Paris. With it, Germany and France established a new foundation for relations that ended centuries of rivalry between them. In 2013, Germany and France celebrated 50 years of friendship.
- 28.1. **Chinese New Year or spring festival** is an important traditional Chinese holiday often referred to as the "Lunar New Year" because of the lunisolar Chinese calendar. Chinese New Year is celebrated in countries and territories with significant Chinese populations, including Mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan, Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mauritius, the Philippines, and also in Chinatowns elsewhere. In China, usually, the Saturday before and the Sunday after Chinese New Year are declared working days, and the two additionally gained holidays are added to the official three days of holiday, so that people have seven consecutive days, including weekends of holidays. In 2017, these are 27<sup>th</sup> January-2<sup>nd</sup> February. To send a greeting, wish a "HAPPY NEW YEAR".

## February

- 2.2. **Groundhog Day (US, CAN):** (Canadian French: Jour de la Marmotte; Pennsylvania German: Grundsaudaag, Murmeltiertag). According to folklore, if it is cloudy when a groundhog emerges from its burrow on this day, then spring will come early; if it is sunny, the groundhog will supposedly see its shadow and retreat back into its burrow, and the winter weather will persist for six more weeks. Modern customs of the holiday involve celebrations where early morning festivals are held to watch the groundhog emerging from its burrow. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Groundhog\\_Day](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Groundhog_Day)

- 11.2. Magha Puja Day:** Buddhist festival celebrated on the full moon day of the presentation of teachings by Lord Buddha to an assembly of holy men. It is a public holiday in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Thailand, and is an occasion when Buddhists tend to go to the temple to perform merit-making activities. In Thailand, Buddhists gather after dark at every temple. They bring flowers, incense, and candles. With candles lit, they circle the temple's main hall 3 times, once for each of the Three Jewels of Buddhism: the Buddha, the Sangha, and the Dharma. Celebrations range widely by devotees and can also include: family gatherings, community gatherings, gift giving, lighting of oil lamps, meditation, chanting, food and flowers to celebrate a "HAPPY MAGHA PUJA & SANGHA DAY".
- 14.2. Saint Valentine's Day** is celebrated in many countries around the world, although it remains a working day in most of them. The day was first associated with romantic love in the circle of Geoffrey Chaucer in the High Middle Ages, when the tradition of courtly love flourished. In 18th-century England, it evolved into an occasion in which lovers expressed their love for each other by presenting flowers, offering confectionery, and sending greeting cards (known as "valentines"). Valentine's Day symbols that are used today include the heart-shaped outline, doves, and the figure of the winged Cupid. In many countries, this marks a day where romantic love is expressed through gifts, cards or flowers (red roses). For many, this is a day to spend time with a significant other in a romantic way by having e.g. a candlelight dinner.
- 20.2. Presidents' Day** (US) is a federal holiday in the US and is always celebrated on the third Monday of February. It is often an occasion to celebrate, or at least remember, all presidents and not just George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. Both Lincoln's and Washington's birthdays are in February. <http://www.when-is.com/presidents-day.asp>
- 20.2. World Day of Social Justice:** The United Nations' (UN) World Day of Social Justice is annually observed on February 20 to encourage people to look at how social justice affects poverty eradication. It also focuses on the goal of achieving full employment and support for social integration.
- 21.2. International Mother Language Day**, recognized by the UN and UNESCO: worldwide to promote awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity and multilingualism.
- 22.2. World Thinking Day** is a day of friendship, advocacy and fundraising for Girl Guides and Girl Scouts around the world. Many troops use it as an opportunity to learn about other countries and cultures.
- 23.2. Fat Thursday** (Weiberfastnacht) is the Thursday before the beginning of Lent and marks the beginning of the street carnival, a week-long street festival, also called "the crazy days". In the Rhenish Carnival regions (centred on the cities of Cologne and Mainz and Düsseldorf), this is an unofficial holiday, with most business closing at noon. Celebrations begin at 11:11 am with people in costumes celebrating in pubs and on the streets. It is a custom that women cut off men's ties as a symbol of men's power. Men walk around the rest of the day with cut ties, for which they are rewarded with kisses ("Bützchen"). <http://www.kleiner-kalender.de/event/weiberfastnacht/0366c.html>
- 27.2. Rose Monday** (Rosenmontag) is the highlight of the carnival period. Although Rose Monday is not an official holiday in the Rhineland, in practice most public life comes to a halt and almost – all workplaces are closed. <http://www.kleiner-kalender.de/event/rosenmontag/56737.html>
- 28.2. Shrove Tuesday / Mardi Gras / Carnival** (Fastnacht) is a festive Christian season which occurs immediately before Lent. It is a public holiday in most Latin American countries, as well as in Greece, Angola, and others (for a complete list, see <http://www.qppstudio.net/monthlyholidays/bank-holidays-february-2017.htm>). In Germany, Cologne, the first worldwide carnival parade took place in 1823. In southwestern Germany, Switzerland, Alsace and Voralberg and Austria, Fastnacht traditionally represents the time of year when the reign of the cold, grim winter spirits is over and these spirits are being hunted down and expelled. Celebrations end on Ash Wednesday. In Fastnacht or Carnival regions, join the crowd watching a parade, and if that is not for you, get out of the region, or else it is going to find you... ☺

## March

- 1.3. Ash Wednesday** (Aschermittwoch) marks the end of carnival and the beginning of the Christian fasting period. For 40 days, no alcohol and meat are consumed, to commemorate Jesus spending 40 days in the desert. Sundays are excluded from the fast, so the period encompasses 46 days in total. <http://www.kleiner-kalender.de/event/aschermittwoch/0107c.html>
- 3.3. World Wildlife Day:** was declared by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in 2013.
- 8.3. International Women's Day** (IWD): Started as a Socialist political event, the holiday blended in the culture of many countries, primarily Eastern Europe, Russia, and the former Soviet bloc. In some regions, the day lost its political flavor, and became simply an occasion for men to express their love for women in a way somewhat similar to a mixture of Mother's Day and Valentine's Day. It is a public holiday in Laos. In Russia, Ukrain, Tadjikistan and other countries, the public holiday is on Mai 10<sup>th</sup>.
- 12.3. Purim** is the Jewish celebration of the deliverance of the Jewish minority in Persia from genocide, and is a bank holiday in Israel. Charity to the poor, sharing food with friends, and vigorous merrymaking mark the observance. Purim is often celebrated the night before among younger people with costume parties in the spirit of "you drink until you don't remember". In Israel, it is a custom to give baskets of sweets to your neighbors, friends, and family to wish them a "HAPPY PURIM".
- 12.-13.3. Holi** is an ancient Hindu religious festival which has become popular with non-Hindus in many parts of South Asia, as well as people of other communities. It celebrates the arrival of spring and is also known as the festival of colors, and sometimes festival of love. It is a national holiday in India. Holi parties, which have become popular all over the world, involve the throwing of color powder in a crowd – so make sure to wear something white you do not need to be white afterwards anymore. Every Indian is happy to hear a "HAPPY HOLI!"

- 14.3. White Day:** In Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and China, Valentine's Day is typically observed by girls and women presenting chocolate gifts. On White Day, the reverse happens: men who received a gift on Valentine's Day are expected to return the favor by giving gifts. Traditionally, popular White Day gifts are cookies, jewelry, white chocolate, white lingerie, and marshmallows.
- 17.3. World Sleep Day:** Intended to be a celebration of sleep and a call to action on important issues related to sleep, including medicine, education, social aspects and driving. ([www.worldsleepday.org](http://www.worldsleepday.org))
- 17.3. Saint Patrick's Day** is a cultural and religious holiday, named after Saint Patrick (c. AD 385–461), the patron saint of Ireland. It is a bank holiday in Ireland, where people celebrate in public parades, and by wearing green attire or the symbol of a three-leaved green shamrock. It is also widely celebrated by the Irish diaspora around the world, especially in Britain, Canada, USA, Argentina, Australia and New Zealand, with parades and other public festivities. Irish all around the world appreciate a "HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY" wish!
- 19.3. Saint Joseph's Day** (Joseftag, San José; CH, LI, Ö, E) is a catholic high feast day in of the husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary. It is a public holiday in some states of Austria, in mainly catholic districts of Switzerland, as well as Liechtenstein, Costa Rica, Columbia and Spain. <http://www.kleiner-kalender.de/event/joseftag/4617-welt.html>
- 21.3. Nowruz (Persian New Year):** principally celebrated on the eve in Iran and Afghanistan, where it marks the first day of spring and the beginning of the year. It is also a public holiday in Albania, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and also celebrated by many groups of people in the Middle East and Central and South Asia. One of the common traditions of Nowruz in Iran is to pay a visit to the elderly and meeting the family, to enjoy food together. The senior members of the family give the younger members cash as a gift for the New Year. If your business partner invites you to Nowruz, attend and enjoy the plentiful foods symbolizing fertility. Wish a "HAPPY NOWRUZ" (for different spellings, check <http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Nowruz>).
- Naw Ruz (Bahá'í New Year)** is one of nine Bahá'í holy days where work is to be suspended and people meet for prayer, music and dancing to praise the vernal equinox symbolizing spiritual growth and renewal. It marks the end of the annual 19-Day Fast and is one of the nine holy days of the year when work is suspended. Wish a "HAPPY NAW-RUZ!"
- 26.3. Daylight Saving Time:** Set the clock one hour forward to summer time, remember: "spring forward, fall back".

## April

- 1.4. April Fool's Day** is celebrated on April 1<sup>st</sup> every year. April 1<sup>st</sup> is not a national holiday, but is widely recognized and celebrated in various countries as a day when people play practical jokes and hoaxes on each other called April fools. In Italy, France and Belgium, children and adults traditionally tack paper fishes on each other's back as a trick and shout "April fish!" in their local languages. In European countries, you should be weary of news in the media on this day – the pranks are all around!
- 7.4. World Health Day**, recognized by the UN and WHO, is celebrated every year on 7 April, it is held to mark WHO's founding, and is seen as an opportunity by the organization to draw worldwide attention to a subject of major importance to global health each year. The 2015 theme is: food safety. <http://www.who.int/campaigns/world-health-day/2017/en/>
- 9.4. Palm Sunday** (Palmsonntag) is a Christian moveable feast that falls on the Sunday before Easter. The feast commemorates Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palm\\_Sunday](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palm_Sunday)
- 9.4. Thai Mahavir Jayanti** is the most important religious holiday in Jainism. It is a public holiday in India and Nepal and celebrates the birth of Mahavira, who taught non-violence, and is considered the founder of Jainism. The day of his birth is celebrated in a massive procession around the cities. The Jains make offerings of milk, rice, fruit, incense, lamps and water to the poor on that day. Wish a "HAPPY MAHAVIR JAYANTI" by sending a card, e-card, or text message.
- 11.-18.4. Passover, or Pesach**, is an important biblically derived Jewish festival. It is a commemoration of the liberation of the Jews over 3,300 years ago by God from slavery in ancient Egypt that was ruled by the Pharaohs. In Israel, where it is a bank holiday, it is custom to clear the house of yeast, and remain abstinent from yeast products, or any leavened foods, to commemorate the haste of the flight through the desert. The traditional "Seder" dinner symbolizes the re-telling of the story with specific dishes, eaten while reciting the "Hagada" (Passover story). Wish a "HAPPY HOLIDAYS" ("HAG SAMEACH").
- 13.-15.4. Songkran (Water Festival)** is a Thai Buddhist festival that goes on for several days during the middle of April. It is a public holiday in Thailand and Myanmar. It coincides with the New Year of many calendars of South and Southeast Asia. People enjoy sprinkling perfumed water on the monks, novices and other people for at least two or three days. People go to the beach or river bank with jars or buckets of water and save fish from dying and splash each other. When everyone is happily wet they are usually entertained by boat races on the river. While the official national holiday is for 3 days, workers' days-off often last for as long as a week. Wish a "HAPPY SONGKRAN"!
- 13.-17.4. Easter (Ostern, Paques, Pasqua, Pasen, Wielkanoc, Velikonocni, Uskrs, Lieldienas, Paskalya)** is a Christian festival and holiday celebrating the resurrection of Jesus Christ on the third day after his crucifixion. It is preceded by Lent, a forty-day period of fasting. The last week of Lent is called Holy Week, and it contains the days of the Easter Triduum, including **Mundy Thursday** (also known as Holy Thursday), commemorating the Last Supper and its preceding foot washing, as well as Good Friday, commemorating the crucifixion and death of Jesus. It is a public holiday in most Christian countries in the world (for a complete list, see [www.qppstudio.net/monthlyholidays/bank-holidays-april-2015.htm](http://www.qppstudio.net/monthlyholidays/bank-holidays-april-2015.htm)). All Christians are happy to receive a "HAPPY EASTER" wish ("FROHE OSTERN" in Germany), usual gifts in Germany include chocolate eggs, painted eggs, chocolate bunnies and cake in the shape of a lamb, but are not obligatory.

# 365 days in 2017 to celebrate and to connect

- 14.4. Vaisakhi:** Vaisakhi, the Sikh New Year, is the holiest day of the calendar for over 20m Sikhs worldwide. Throughout India the celebrations vary. In the North of India, Vaisakhi is a time signifying the harvest, and as such is celebrated as a harvest festival. Traditionally people buy each other gifts to mark this occasion. For the Sikh, Vaisakhi commemorates the day when the Sikh Guru eliminated caste differences and founded Khalsa Panth in 1699. It is also celebrated as the New Year in the South of India, and is marked by holding Pooram festivals, where processions occur to honor Lord Vishnu. In Assam, Vaisakhi is celebrated as Rangali Bihu (colors). The greeting is: "HAPPY VAISAKHI!"
- 16.4. Pascha** is the Orthodox Christian Easter, according to the Julian calendar.
- 20.4.-1.5. Ridvan** is a twelve-day festival in the Bahá'í faith, commemorating the commencement of Bahá'u'lláh's prophethood. It is the most holy Bahá'í festival, and is also referred to as the "Most Great Festival". There are no traditional celebrations in Bahá'í faith, some families like to decorate with fresh flowers and have a special meal with friends, others like to focus on singing special songs during family prayers or hosting a community party.
- 22.4. International Mother Earth Day:** recognized by the UN, it acknowledges that "the Earth and its ecosystems are our home" and that "it is necessary to promote harmony with nature and the Earth" (for more information, please see <http://www.un.org/en/events/motherearthday>).
- 23.4. Children's Day (Turkey):** The Grand National Assembly of Turkey was established on April 23, 1920, and to commemorate the event, April 23 was proclaimed a national holiday in 1921. Since 1927 it has also become Children's Day, "The Holiday of National Sovereignty and Children". Schools participate in week-long ceremonies marked by performances. The children also send their representatives to replace state officials and high ranking bureaucrats in their offices. Turkey houses TRT International April 23 Children's Festival on this day, where groups of children from other countries participate in the festivities while staying at Turkish families' homes ([www.trt23nisan.com/en](http://www.trt23nisan.com/en)).
- 24.4. Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Day)** is observed as Israel's day of commemoration for the approximately six million Jews who perished in the Holocaust. On this day, there are ceremonies throughout Israel and sirens are sounded during which people stand in silence.
- 27.4. Girls' Day:** 'Future Prospects for Girls' initiated a large campaign in which a wide range of professions and activities is presented to girls of 10 years upwards. It is meant to support girls in their vocational choice ([http://www.girls-day.de/Girls\\_Day\\_Info/English\\_Information](http://www.girls-day.de/Girls_Day_Info/English_Information)). What could be an activity in your organization?
- 28.4. Arbor Day** (from the Latin "arbor", meaning "tree") is a holiday in which individuals and groups are encouraged to plant and care for trees.

## May

- 1.5. International Worker's Day (Labor Day in the USA)** is an annual holiday to celebrate the achievements of workers. Labor Day has its origins in the labor union movement, specifically the eight-hour day movement, which advocated eight hours for work, eight hours for recreation, and eight hours for rest. It is a bank holiday in most countries around the world (for a complete list, see [www.qppstudio.net/monthlyholidays/bank-holidays-may-2015.htm](http://www.qppstudio.net/monthlyholidays/bank-holidays-may-2015.htm)).
- May Day** on May 1 is an ancient Northern Hemisphere spring festival, also called **Walpurgis Night**. In Germany, celebrations are traditionally held on the night before May Day, including dancing into First of May, bonfires and the wrapping of a maypole ("Maibaum").
- 1.5. Yom Hazikaron (IL):** "Day of Remembrance for the Fallen Soldiers of Israel and Victims of Terrorism" is Israel's official Memorial Day. Though not an official bank holiday, there are ceremonies throughout Israel and sirens are sounded during which people stand in silence.
- 2.5. Yom Ha'Atzmaut – Jewish** (begins sundown on 23) (Independence Day) in Israel  
Is a bank holiday in Israel, on which people usually go to Barbecues in parks. In the evening before, parties are held throughout the country with fireworks (the only day in the year with fireworks in Israel, comparable to New Year's Eve in other countries).
- 3.5. May 3rd Constitution Day (Święto Narodowe Trzeciego Maja):** Polish national and public holiday which celebrates the declaration of the Constitution. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/May\\_3rd\\_Constitution\\_Day](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/May_3rd_Constitution_Day).
- 5.5. Europe Day** is an annual celebration of peace and unity in Europe. There are two separate designations of Europe Day: 5 May for the Council of Europe, and 9 May for the European Union (EU).
- 6.5. International No Diet Day** is an annual celebration of body acceptance, including fat acceptance and body shape diversity.
- 7.5. World Laughter Day** takes place on the first Sunday of May of every year. The first celebration was on January 11, 1998, in Mumbai, India, and was arranged by Dr. Madan Kataria, founder of the worldwide Laughter Yoga movement (see also [www.worldlaughterday.org](http://www.worldlaughterday.org)).
- 10.5. Visakha Puja – Buddha Day**, also known as **Vesak**, is the major Buddhist festival of the year, observed traditionally by Buddhists in Nepal, Sri Lanka, Tibet, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and the South East Asian countries of Singapore, Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, and Indonesia. Sometimes informally called "Buddha's Birthday", it actually commemorates the birth, enlightenment, and death of Gautama Buddha. Greeting: "HAPPY VESAK DAY!", "HAPPY VISAKHA PUJA!"

- 14.5. Mother's Day** is a celebration honoring mothers and motherhood, maternal bonds, and the influence of mothers in society. It is celebrated on various days in many parts of the world, but the most common date around the world is the second Sunday of May.
- 15.5. International Day of Families**, recognized by the UN: reflects the importance the international community attaches to families. (<http://www.un.org/en/events/familyday>)
- 21.5. Diversity Day**, officially known as "The World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development", recognized by UN and UNESCO: is an opportunity to understand the value of cultural diversity and learn how to live together in harmony. (<http://www.un.org/en/events/culturaldiversityday>)
- 22.5. World Biodiversity Day** – International Day for Biological Diversity, recognized by the UN, is a day for the promotion of biodiversity issues.
- 25.5. Ascension Day (Christi Himmelfahrt)** commemorates the bodily Ascension of Jesus into heaven. It is one of the ecumenical feasts (i.e., universally celebrated) of Christian churches, and therefore is a public holiday in countries with Christian traditions all over the world (for a complete list, see <http://www.qppstudio.net>).
- 25.5. Africa Day** is the annual commemoration of the 1963 founding of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), they also celebrate the hard-fought achievement of their freedom from European colonial powers. However, the name and date of Africa Day has been retained as a celebration of African unity. Africa Day is observed as a public holiday in only five African countries: Ghana, Mali, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe. However, celebrations are held in some African countries, as well as by Africans in the diaspora. Celebrations include: formal gatherings with panel discussions, street marches, rallies featuring cultural entertainment, poetry, and speakers, and more.
- 27.5. Beginning of Ramadan** (begins on the eve): Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar; Muslims worldwide observe this as a month of fasting. During Ramadan, Muslims do not eat or drink from sunup to sundown. It is a month dedicated to prayer wherein they are expected to ask forgiveness for their sins, pray for guidance, refrain from self-indulgence, and purify themselves through self-restraint and good deeds. Muslims believe that this month is filled with blessings, and it is appropriate to wish them well at the beginning of the month. "HAPPY RAMADAN!", "RAMADAN KAREEM!", "RAMADAN MUBARAK!"
- 29.5. Memorial Day (USA)** is a United States federal holiday which occurs every year on the final Monday of May. Memorial Day is a day of remembering the men and women who died while serving in the United States Armed Forces. Many people have Barbeques and/or visit the decorated cemeteries and memorials, particularly to honor those who have died in military service.
- 31.5.-1.6. Shavuot** is a Jewish holiday that celebrates the giving of the Law on Sinai (Sunset, June 3 - nightfall, June 5). In Israel, dairy products are consumed traditionally on this day. You might get hit by water balloons by children playing. Wish a "HAPPY HOLIDAYS" ("HAG SAMEACH")!

## June

- 4.6. Pentecost (Pfingsten)** is a prominent feast for all Christians in the calendar of ancient Israel celebrating the giving of the Law on Sinai. It became a feast commemorating the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles and other followers of Jesus Christ. Pentecost is sometimes described by some Christians today as the "Birthday of the Church".
- 5.6. Whit Monday (Pfingstmontag)**: The Monday after Pentecost is a public holiday in i.e. Austria, The Bahamas, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Gibraltar, Hungary, Iceland, Côte d'Ivoire, Luxembourg, Monaco, the Netherlands, Norway, Romania and Switzerland. In the Eastern Orthodox Church Whit Monday is known as "**Monday of the Holy Spirit**" and is dedicated specifically to the honor of God the Holy Spirit.
- 5.6. World Environment Day**, recognized by the UN: to raise global awareness of the need to take positive environmental action. It is run by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
- 11.6. Trinity Sunday (Trinitatis, Dreifaltigkeitsfest)** celebrates the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, the three Persons of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Orthodox Christians celebrate **All Saints**.
- 15.6. Corpus Christi (Fronleichnam)** is a Latin Christian rite celebrating the tradition and belief in the body and blood of Jesus Christ and his Real Presence in the Eucharist. At the end of Holy Mass, there is often a procession of the Blessed Sacrament. The most notable Eucharistic procession is that by the Pope in Rome. It is a public holiday in i.e. Austria, Bolivia, Brazil, Croatia, Dominican Republic, Germany, Guinea, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Poland, Spain, Switzerland and Uruguay.
- 21.6. World Music Day**: annual music festival taking place on June 21 in cities around the world. It was invented by the French Minister of Culture, Jack Lang.
- 24.6. St. John's Day** is the Christian holiday of St. John the Baptist which got fused with the European celebration of Summer solstice. It is a public holiday day in several countries, such as Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania – a central theme in the celebrations is the lighting of bonfires. <http://www.officeholidays.com/countries/europe/stjohnsday.php>
- 24.6. Summer Solstice (Midsummer Day)** is a national Holiday in Sweden and Finland and celebrated each year on the Saturday falling between 20–26 June. Festivities start on the Friday before – Midsummer's Eve. It has become one of the most important holidays in Sweden, with traditional events including raising and dancing around a huge maypole. Swedish will also consume a large amount of alcohol and raucous drinking songs are a common sound during the celebrations. [http://www.officeholidays.com/countries/sweden/midsummers\\_day.php](http://www.officeholidays.com/countries/sweden/midsummers_day.php)
- 25.-27.6. Eid al-Fitr** (begins on the eve) Also called **Feast of Breaking the Fast**, the **Sugar Feast**, or **Bayram (Bajram)**, is an important religious holiday celebrated by Muslims worldwide that marks the end of Ramadan, the Islamic holy month of fasting. It is forbidden to fast on the Day of Eid, and many acknowledge this with a small sweet breakfast, preferably of date (fruit), before

attending a special Eid prayer. As an obligatory act of charity, money is paid to the poor and the needy. Food is the centre of this holiday, so this is one of the highlights of the evening. It is a custom to give gifts (especially to children), and all Muslims will be very happy to hear a "EID MUBARAK!", "HAPPY EID", or to receive a card or e-card (for example [www.123greetings.com/events/eid\\_ul\\_fitr](http://www.123greetings.com/events/eid_ul_fitr)).

## July

- 4.7. Independence Day (USA)**, commonly known as the Fourth of July, is a federal public holiday in the United States commemorating the adoption of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, declaring independence from the Kingdom of Great Britain. It is marked by patriotic displays and celebrated with fireworks, parades, barbecues, carnivals, fairs, picnics, concerts, baseball games, family reunions, and political speeches and ceremonies, in addition to various other public and private events celebrating the history, government, and traditions of the United States. Greeting: "HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY!"
- 8.7. Asalha Puja Day (Buddhist)**: commemorates the Buddha's first sermon in the Deer Park in Benares, India and the founding of the Buddhist sangha (monkhood). To mark the day, ceremonies are held in Buddhist temples across Thailand. Many Thai people return to their ancestral homes to donate offerings to temples and listen to sermons. In the evening they will often perform a ceremony called 'wian tian', where they walk clockwise around the main shrine of the temple carrying a candle, incense sticks and lotus flowers. During the lent period, elaborate wax candles are kept burning. In the city of Ubon, there is a Candle Festival is held. Following a parade of candles, the winners of best candle design are announced. In Saraburi, local monks parade through the town with their alms bowls. Instead of the usual offerings of food, people will instead put flowers into their bowls. The monks then return to the temples and offer the flowers in honour of the Buddha. [http://www.officeholidays.com/countries/thailand/asahna\\_bucha\\_day.php](http://www.officeholidays.com/countries/thailand/asahna_bucha_day.php)
- 11.7. World Population Day** is an annual event, observed on July 11 every year, which seeks to raise awareness of global population issues. The event was established by the United Nations Development Programme in 1989.
- 14.7. Bastille Day** is the name given in English-speaking countries to the French National Day, which is celebrated on 14 July each year. In France, this national holiday is formally called **La Fête Nationale** and commonly: **Le quatorze juillet**. The oldest and largest regular military parade in Europe is held on the morning of 14 July, on the Champs-Élysées in Paris. There's no special gift or wish necessary.
- 17.7. World Day for International Justice**, to recognize the emerging system of international criminal justice. July 17 was chosen because it is the anniversary of the adoption of the Rome Statute, the treaty that created the International Criminal Court.
- 18.7. Mandela Day** is an international day in honour of Nelson Mandela. The day was officially declared by the United Nations as a day to honour the legacy of Nelson Mandela and his values, through volunteering and community service. The day is a global call to action that celebrates the idea that each individual has the power to transform the world <http://www.cute-calendar.com/event/mandela-day/22093.html>
- 30.7. International Day of Friendship**: recognized by the UN, is a day for celebrating friendship. The day has been celebrated in several southern South American countries for many years, particularly in Paraguay, where the first World Friendship Day was proposed in 1958.

## August

- 13.-15.8. O-bon (Shinto)**, or simply **Bon**, is the Japanese version of the Chinese Ghost Festival. It is a day to honor the spirits of one's ancestors. This Buddhist-Confucian custom has evolved into a family reunion holiday during which people return to ancestral family places and visit and clean their ancestors' graves, and when the spirits of ancestors are supposed to revisit the household altars. It traditionally includes a dance, known as Bon-Odori. Many Obon celebrations include a huge carnival with rides, games, and summer festival food like watermelon. The festival ends with paper lanterns being illuminated and then floated down rivers symbolically, signaling the ancestral spirits' return to the world of the dead. This ceremony usually culminates in a fireworks display. Many Japanese take this time to go and see relatives in the country, if possible, for several days. Do not plan important meetings around this time.
- August Obon**: In 2017, the peak of the Obon travel season is anticipated to take place between August 11 and August 20. The busiest days in Japan are expected to be August 11 – 12 with people leaving big cities, and August 15 -16 with people returning to the big cities.
- 13.8. International Lefthanders Day**: to promote awareness of the inconveniences facing left-handers in a predominantly right-handed world (<http://www.lefthandersday.com>)
- 14.8. Krishna Janmashtami**, also known as **Krishnashtami**, is an annual Hindu commemoration of the birth of the Hindu deity Krishna. It is celebrated in India, Nepal, Bangladesh and Pakistan. Rasa lila, dramatic enactments of the life of Krishna, re-create the flirtatious aspects of Krishna's youthful days. The Dahi Handi festival celebrates God's playful and mischievous side, where teams of young men form human towers to reach a high-hanging pot of butter and break it. Send a "HAPPY KRISHNA JANMASHTAMI" or a "HAPPY JANMASHTAMI" wish. For e-cards, check <http://poetrysync.blogspot.de/2013/08/happy-krishna-janmashtami-greeting-sms.html>.

**15.8. Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Mariä Himmelfahrt):** informally known as **The Assumption**, according to the beliefs of the Roman Catholic Church, Eastern Orthodoxy, Oriental Orthodoxy, and parts of Anglicanism, was the bodily taking up of the Virgin Mary into Heaven at the end of her earthly life. It is a public holiday in most Christian countries in the world. In Germany, it is a public holiday only in the states Bavaria and Saarland.

**19.8. World Humanitarian Day**, recognized by the UN, is a day dedicated to recognize humanitarian personnel and those who have lost their lives working for humanitarian causes.

## September

**1.9. Anti-war Day (Antikriegstag):** Since the early 1950s, the 1<sup>st</sup> of September is called **“Peace Day”** or **“World Peace Day”** in Germany. It commemorates the beginning of WWII, which started when the `Wehrmacht` attacked Poland in 1939. This day is used to call for World peace in assemblies and demonstrations. In 2009, the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the beginning of WWII, Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany said at the memorial service in Gdansk, Poland: “The war unleashed by Germany brought horrible suffering to many people: years of deprivation of rights, of indignation and of destruction. No other nation has in its history suffered as long a German occupation as Poland has. (...) I commemorate the 60 million people who lost their lives in this war unleashed by Germany (...)”. See the speech: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aRBRN5maifU> (after min. 3).

**1.9. Eid al Adha**, also called **Feast of the Sacrifice**, the Major Festival, the Greater Eid, is the second of two religious holidays celebrated by Muslims worldwide each year. Celebrations begin on the eve. It honors the willingness of Abraham to sacrifice his young first-born son Ishmael as an act of submission to God's command, and his son's acceptance to being sacrificed, before God intervened to provide Abraham with a lamb to sacrifice instead. Men, women and children are expected to dress in their finest clothing to perform the dawn Eid prayer. Affluent Muslims who can afford it sacrifice animals (usually a cow, but can also be a camel, goat, sheep or ram, depending on the region), keeping a portion to feed themselves and giving the rest to relatives and the poor. All Muslims will be very happy to hear a “EID MUBARAK!”, “HAVE A BLESSED EID” or “HAPPY EID”, or to receive a card or e-card (for example: [www.123greetings.com/events/eid\\_ul\\_adha](http://www.123greetings.com/events/eid_ul_adha)).

**4.9. Labor Day (USA)** is a national public holiday celebrated on the first Monday in September. It is a celebration of the American labor movement and is dedicated to the social and economic achievements of workers. The equivalent holiday in Canada, Labour Day, is celebrated on the same day. It often involves a festival for the workers and their families.

**5.9. Ghost Festival** is a traditional Chinese festival and holiday celebrated by Chinese in many countries. According to Chinese tradition, on Ghost Day the gates of hell open and the deceased are believed to visit the living. The way to celebrate the Hungry Ghost Festival is by preparing some foods for the returning ghosts and putting them on sacrificial altars. Chinese people also prepare money (hell-bills), and other items made of paper to be burned for their ancestors. In some East Asian countries, live performances are held and everyone is invited to attend. The first row of seats is always empty as this is where the ghosts sit. There are many things one should not do in this time, for more information check <http://my.72dragon.com/609/chinese-ghost-month-taboo>

**11.9. Nayrouz:** Coptic Orthodox New Year, the Ethiopian Orthodox New Year, called **Enkutatash**, falls on the same date. In Egypt, the start of the Coptic calendar coincides with the first day of Diocletian's, the Roman Emperor, bloody rule over Egypt. The highest number of martyrs in the history of the church came from this time. For this reason, Nayrouz is also a day for remembering the martyrs and their sacrifices. Apart from the Church's celebration, Copts celebrate the New Year by eating red dates, which are in season, the red recalls the martyrs' blood, the light-colored flesh of the date symbolizes their purity, and the stony pit symbolizes their steadfast faith.

**13.9. Positive Thinking Day:** It is best to start with a good thought (“Today is a good day!”) into Positive Thinking Day.

**17.9. Oktoberfest:** „Die Wiesn“ is the world's largest fair to pay tribute to that ubiquitous beverage: beer. It is held in Munich, Germany. The number of visitors per year now stands at 6 million and counting. If you try to get a room in Munich around this time you better book years in advance. One FAQ for you... just what will of beer cost you at the 2016 festival? Set aside about 11 Euros per litre for this epic beer-swilling event. (For more information check: <http://www.oktoberfesttours.travel/oktoberfest-2017>)

**-3.10.**

**20.-22.9. Rosh Hashanah: Jewish New Year (2017 → 5778).** The day is believed to be the anniversary of the creation of Adam and Eve, the first man and woman, and their first actions toward the realization of mankind's role in God's world. Rosh Hashanah customs include sounding the shofar (a hollowed-out ram's horn) and eating symbolic foods such as apples dipped in honey to evoke a “sweet new year”. In Israel, traditionally, large festive dinners are held. You wish others a “HAPPY NEW YEAR” (“SHANAH TOVAH”), and you don't wait for the countdown at midnight! You can wish it throughout the day.

**21.9. International Day of Peace**, recognized by the UN, sometimes unofficially known as **World Peace Day**, is observed annually on 21<sup>st</sup> September. It is dedicated to world peace, and specifically the absence of war and violence, such as might be occasioned by a temporary ceasefire in a combat zone for humanitarian aid access. The day was first celebrated in 1982, and is kept by many nations, political groups, military groups, and peoples (for more information, see <http://www.internationaldayofpeace.org>).

**21.-29.9. Navratri (Shardiya Maha Navrati) / Nine Emperor Gods Festival** is a festival dedicated to the worship of the Hindu deity Durga. The word Navratri means ‘nine nights’, during these nine nights and ten days, nine forms of Shakti/Devi are worshipped. Navratri is an important major festival and is celebrated with great zeal all over India.

**26.-30.9. Durga Puja** (Bengali: ‘Worship of Durga’), also referred to as **Durgotsava** (Bengali: ‘Festival of Durga’), is an annual Hindu festival in South Asia that celebrates worship of the Hindu mother goddess Durga . In West Bengal it is the biggest festival of the year. During the week of Durga Puja, in the entire state of West Bengal as well as in large enclaves of Bengalis everywhere, life comes to a complete standstill. Everywhere, in playgrounds, traffic circles, ponds—wherever space may be available—elaborate artistic structures called pandals 'are set up, which are



used as temporary temples. In Kolkata, traffic comes to a standstill at night, and singing, dancing, sweets & gaiety are an integral part of the festival. People send Durga Puja gifts to dear ones and express good wishes. (see <http://www.durgaonline.com/about> for more information and <http://durga-puja.org> for the exact dates)

- 30.9. Yom Kippur** (begins on the eve), also known as **Day of Atonement**, is the holiest day of the year for the Jewish people. Its central themes are atonement and repentance. Jewish people traditionally observe this holy day with an approximate 25-hour period of fasting and intensive prayer. According to Jewish tradition, God inscribes each person's fate for the coming year into a book, the Book of Life, on Rosh Hashanah, and waits until Yom Kippur to "seal" the verdict. During the Days of Awe, a Jew tries to amend his or her behavior and seek forgiveness for wrongs done. In Israel, you wish people a "GOOD SEAL" ("GMAR CHATIMA TOVAH"), and there is a large dinner before the beginning of the fasting at sunset, after which the complete country is on an absolute hold-still, including public transport and all services.

## October

- 1.10. World Vegetarian Day:** established by the North American Vegetarian Society to promote the joy, compassion and life-enhancing possibilities of vegetarianism.
- 1.10. Harvest festival (Erntedankfest)** is a Christian Thanksgiving harvest festival. In Germany, the harvest festival is celebrated on this day or around this day in rural communities with markets and fairs, often accompanied by a Church service thanking God for the harvest. It is not a public holiday.
- 1.-7.10. Mid-Autumn Festival** is an official harvest festival celebrated by Chinese and Vietnamese. It is a public holiday China, North Korea, South Korea, Hong Kong and Taiwan. Among the Vietnamese, it is considered the second-most important holiday tradition. All are celebrating the holiday by carrying of brightly lit lanterns, lighting lanterns on towers, or floating sky lanterns. It celebrates three fundamental concepts: gathering, thanksgiving and praying. The festival is an occasion for outdoor reunions among friends and relatives, for burning incense in reverence to deities and performances of dragon and lion dances.
- This festival corresponds to a nine-day Taoist celebration called the **Nine Emperor Gods Festival** beginning on the eve of 9th lunar month of the Chinese calendar, which is observed primarily by the ethnic Chinese of Min Nan linguistic group in Southeast Asian countries like Myanmar, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand and also the Riau Islands.
- 2.10. International Day of Non-Violence**, recognized by the UN, is observed on 2 October, the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, to "disseminate the message of non-violence, including through education and public awareness". This day is referred to in India as **Gandhi Jayanti**, and a national holiday celebrated in India to mark the occasion of the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, the "Father of the Nation" (though not officially).
- 3.10. German Unity Day (Tag der deutschen Einheit):** The Day of German Unity on 3 October has been a German national holiday since the reunification in 1990, when the German Democratic Republic (GDR) in the East officially joined the Federal Republic of Germany in the West, thus forming one Federal Republic of Germany.
- 5.-6.10. Sukkot** (begins on the eve.): is a seven-day biblical Jewish holiday, with the first day celebrated as a full festival with special prayer services and holiday meals. It commemorates **6.10.** the Israelites' 40 years of travel in the desert after the Exodus from slavery in Egypt. The remaining days are known as **Chol HaMoed** ("festival weekdays"). In Israel, traditionally, families build a sukkah (a make-shift booth) to commemorate the 40 years of travel through the desert. The sukkah is used for hosting guests and more traditional Jews sleep in the sukkah. People wish each other "HAPPY HOLIDAY" ("HAG SAMEACH")!
- 10.10. World Mental Health Day:** recognized by the UN and WHO, is a day for global mental health education, awareness and advocacy.
- 17.-20.10. Diwali**, also called "festival of lights", is a five-day Hindu festival. For Hindus, Diwali is one of the most important festivals of the year and is celebrated in families by performing traditional activities together in their homes. It involves the lighting of small clay lamps filled with oil to signify the triumph of good over evil. Diwali is an official holiday in India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Mauritius, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, Suriname, Malaysia, Singapore and Fiji. Just like Christmas in the Christian Community presents are given to family members, friends, colleagues, clients or service providers. "HAPPY DIWALI" is always welcome as a wish to friends, clients and others.
- 21.10. Hijri New Year**, also known as **Islamic New Year**, is the day that marks the beginning of a new Islamic calendar year. In Islam there is no special religious ceremony to mark the New Year. Special readings are offered and they normally centre on the flight of Prophet Muhammad from Mecca to Medina or the narration of the Hegira.
- 22.10. Baha'u'llahs Birthday:** The Birth of Bahá'u'lláh is one of nine holy days in the Bahá'í calendar. The holy day celebrates the birth of Bahá'u'lláh, the founder of the Bahá'í Faith. As with other holidays, Baha'is have few expectations on how the holiday should be celebrated. Commonly it is marked with community gatherings for prayers and festivity, and work is suspended.
- 29.10. Daylight Saving Time ends.** Set the clock one hour back to winter time, remember: "spring forward, fall back".
- 31.10. Reformation Day:** is a religious holiday celebrated in remembrance of the Reformation, particularly by Lutheran and some Reformed church communities. It is a civic holiday in Chile, Slovenia and in the German states of Brandenburg, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, and Thuringia.
- 31.10. Halloween**, also known as **All Hallows' Eve**, is a yearly celebration observed in a number of countries. It initiates the triduum of Halloween, the time in the liturgical year dedicated to remembering the dead, including saints (hallows), martyrs, and all the faithful departed believers. In America, typical festive Halloween activities include trick-or-treating, attending costume parties, decorating, carving pumpkins into jack-o'-lanterns, lighting bonfires, apple bobbing, visiting haunted attractions, playing pranks, telling scary stories, and watching horror films. In many

other countries, the tradition has become more and more associated with scary costumes and celebrations like parades and parties as well. The usual “HAPPY HALLOWEEN” wish is accompanied by symbols of pumpkins, skulls, spider webs, witches on brooms, vampires, and many more...

- 31.10. Day of the Dead** (Spanish: **Día de Muertos**) is a Latin American holiday, celebrated in gatherings of family and friends to pray for and remember friends and family members who have died. Many go for a festive picnic into the cemetery. It is particularly celebrated in Mexico, where the day is a bank holiday. In Mexico, people build a shrine in the house, cook the deceased's favorite dish and eat it together with family in a vivid and merry dinner feast. Adults give each other skulls made from sugar as a gift.

## November

- 1.11.** The **second day of Hallowmas** is known as **All Saints' Day (All Hallows)** in the Catholic tradition, it is a holy day to honor all the saints and martyrs, both known and unknown.
- 1.11. World Vegan Day:** to celebrate animal rights through Veganism. Animal advocates hold street stalls about veganism, host vegan potluck events, plant memorial trees for World Vegan Day and give away animal friendly vegan baking.
- 5.11. Guy Fawkes Day** (UK): Guy Fawkes Night celebrates the foiling of an attempt to blow up the Houses of Parliament in London. It is not a public holiday, but many people light bonfires and set off fireworks in the evening. (<http://www.timeanddate.com/holidays/uk/guy-fawkes-day>)
- 9.11. Inventors' Day** is a day of the year set aside by a country to recognize the contributions of inventors. In Europe, this day is celebrated on November 9th, in other parts of the world at different dates, for a list see: <http://www.altiusdirectory.com/Society/national-inventors-day.html>
- 11.11. St. Martin's Day** is a time for feasting celebrations. This holiday originated in France, then spread to Germany, Scandinavia, and Eastern Europe. **Martinmas** actually has two meanings: in the agricultural calendar it marks the beginning of the natural winter, but in the economic calendar it is seen as the end of autumn. The feast coincides not only with the end of the Octave of All Saints, but with harvest-time, the time when newly produced wine is ready for drinking, and the end of winter preparations, including the butchering of animals. Because it also comes before the penitential season of Advent, it is seen as a mini 'carnival', with all the feasting and bonfires. In Germany, children up to the age of 10 celebrate St. Martins by building lanterns and parading with St. Martin on a Horse. The parade usually ends at a large bonfire with celebrations and singing.
- 13.11. World Kindness Day** is to highlight good deeds in the community focusing on the positive power and the common thread of kindness which binds us.
- 16.11. International Day for Tolerance**, recognized by the UN: to generate public awareness of the dangers of intolerance.
- 19.11. International Men's Day:** Inaugurated in 1999 in Trinidad and Tobago, the day has become an international event day, focusing on men's and boys' health, improving gender relations, promoting gender equality, and highlighting positive male role models. For more information, see: <http://www.internationalmensday.com>
- 23.11. Thanksgiving** is a national holiday celebrated primarily in the United States and Canada and is one of the major holidays of the year. It originated as a day of giving thanks for the blessing of the harvest and of the preceding year, and as such seasonal dishes such as Pumpkin pie, various squashes, potatoes, sweet corn and others are commonly served for a festive dinner with the obligatory Turkey. Because it is celebrated with the family, it is the most traveled time of the year for Americans, more so than Christmas. If it can be avoided, do not travel between Wednesday until Sunday. All business is on a complete stand-still! “HAPPY THANKSGIVING!”
- 24.11. Buy Nothing Day** is an international day of protest against consumerism. In North America, Buy Nothing Day is held the Friday after U.S. Thanksgiving, also called “Black Friday”, which is one of the ten busiest shopping days in the United States. In other countries, it is held the following day, which is the last Saturday in November. Buy Nothing Day was founded in Vancouver by artist Ted Dave as a day for society to examine the issue of over-consumption. Participation now includes more than 65 nations.

## December

- 1.12. Mawlid (Prophet Muhammad's Birthday)** is celebrated with large street parades in some Muslim countries. Homes and mosques are decorated. Others listen to their children read out poems about events that occurred in the Prophet Muhammad's life. Mawlid is celebrated in most predominantly Islamic countries. Saudi Arabia is the only Muslim country where Mawlid is not an official public holiday. You can wish a “HAPPY PROPHET MUHAMMAD'S BIRTHDAY!”, also with a card ([www.123greetings.com/events/mawlid\\_al\\_nabi](http://www.123greetings.com/events/mawlid_al_nabi))
- 1.12. World AIDS Day**, recognized by the UN, is dedicated to raising awareness of the AIDS pandemic caused by the spread of HIV infection (for more information, see [www.worldaidsday.org](http://www.worldaidsday.org)).
- 3.12. International Day of Persons with Disabilities**, recognized by the UN, aims to promote an understanding of disability issues and mobilize support for the dignity, rights and well-being of persons with disabilities
- 6.12. Saint Nicholas (Nikolaus)**, also called Nikolaos of Myra, was a historic 4<sup>th</sup>-century saint and Greek Bishop. The historical Saint Nicholas is commemorated and revered among Anglican, Catholic, Lutheran, and Orthodox Christians. Saint Nicholas is the patron saint of sailors, merchants, archers, thieves, children, pawnbrokers and students in various cities and countries around Europe. In Germany, children set their shoes out on the night of December 5<sup>th</sup>. They polish their boots to show they've been good. According to the legend, Nikolaus comes in the middle of the night and leaves little treats – like coins, chocolate, oranges and toys – for good children. In the Netherlands and Flanders, **Sinterklaas** (or **St. Nicolaas**) is one of the main

events of the year for children, second only to their birthday. "Sint" is not just celebrated by families on the 5<sup>th</sup> of December, but youth clubs and schools tend to have a celebration of their own. An absolute must as a Sinterklaas present is a chocolate letter with the initial of the first name, also for adults of all ages. "HAPPY SAINT NICHOLAS"

- 10.12. Human Rights Day**, recognized by the UN, to honor the United adoption and proclamation, on 10<sup>th</sup> of December 1948, of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)
- 12.12. Yule Lads** are figures from Icelandic folklore who put rewards or punishments into shoes placed by children in window sills during the last thirteen nights before Christmas Eve. Every night, one Yuletide lad visits each child, leaving gifts or rotting potatoes, depending on the child's behaviour throughout the year. The first Yule Lad, Stekkjarstaur, visits on the night before 12<sup>th</sup> December, the last one, Kertasníkir, visits on the 24<sup>th</sup>. For pictures and descriptions, see ([www.iceland.is/images/the-icelandic-yule-lads.jpg](http://www.iceland.is/images/the-icelandic-yule-lads.jpg)).
- 13.12. Saint Lucy's Day** (St. Lucia) is the church feast day dedicated to Lucia of Syracuse (283-304). It is celebrated most commonly in Italy and in Scandinavia, with each emphasizing a different aspect. In Sweden, alongside Midsummer, the Lucia celebrations represent one of the foremost cultural traditions, with candlelit procession on 13<sup>th</sup> of December, with girls and boys clad in white full-length gowns singing songs together. Each year, a national Lucia is proclaimed in one or other of the TV channels, while every town and village worth the name chooses its own Lucia. Lucia, as the ancient mythical figure with an abiding role as a bearer of light in the dark Swedish winters, is driven around town, to spread light and song. The celebrations include ginger snaps and sweet, saffron-flavoured buns (lussekatter). Greeting: "HAPPY ST. LUCIA'S DAY!"
- 13.-20.12. Hanukkah**, also known as the **Festival of Lights**, is an eight-day Jewish holiday commemorating the rededication of the Holy Temple (the Second Temple) in Jerusalem at the time of the Maccabean Revolt against the Seleucid Empire of the 2nd century BCE. In Israel, Hanukkah is not a holiday of gift giving for eight days, in opposition to many e.g. American Jewish celebrations. Presents, if any are given, are usually chocolates and candy, and money. The Hanukkah menorahs ("hanukiya") have nine branches: one for the Shamash, or lighting candle, and eight for each day of Hanukkah. It is lit in homes every night, and there are also public lightings in shopping centers, along with saying the prayers, singing Maoz Tsur and other songs, and of course, there is a lot of indulging in oily, fried foods! "HAPPY HANUKKAH!"
- 24.12. Christmas Eve** (Gregorian calendar) is the Christian celebration of the birth of Jesus. Since Christian tradition holds that Jesus was born at night, Midnight Mass is celebrated on Christmas Eve, traditionally at midnight. Today, it is celebrated as a family feast, with different gift bearers: In Slavic countries, the figure is mostly Father Frost. In Scandinavia, it is an elf-like figure or tomten who comes at Yule (and who sometimes also takes the form of a goat). In Western Europe, the figure was also similar to an elf, developing into Father Christmas in the modern period in Great Britain. In German-speaking Europe and Latin Europe, there is a separate tradition of a young child or fairy-like being bringing presents, known as Christkind. From these European traditions, the North American figure of Santa Claus developed, beginning in the 1820s. The American figure in turn had considerable influence on the various European traditions during the 20th century. For more Christmas present bringers: [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_Christmas\\_gift-bringers\\_by\\_country](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Christmas_gift-bringers_by_country). Wish a "MERRY CHRISTMAS!" ("FROHE WEIHNACHTEN!")
- 31.12. New Year's Eve** (Gregorian calendar): In many countries, New Year's Eve is celebrated at evening social gatherings, where many people dance, eat, drink alcoholic beverages, and watch or light fireworks to mark the new year. Some people attend a watchnight service. The celebrations generally go on past midnight into January 1<sup>st</sup> (**New Year's Day**). The island nations of Kiribati and Samoa are the first to welcome the New Year while Honolulu, Hawaii is among the last places to welcome the New Year. The new year is celebrated with 12 grapes for the final countdown in the old year in Spain. In Canada, rural Quebec, people ice fish and drink alcoholic beverages with their friends until the early hours of January. In Austria, radios broadcast the sound of the Pummerin, the bell of St. Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna, followed by the Donauwalzer ("The Blue Danube") by Johann Strauss II, and many waltz into the new year. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, children receive gifts from "Father Frost". In Estonia, people believe that one should eat seven, nine, or twelve times on New Year's Eve, because for each meal consumed, the person gains the strength of that many men the following year. In Germany, celebrations involve "Bleigießen" (pouring lead), where people tell fortunes by the shapes made by molten lead dropped into cold water. At midnight in Greece, families count down and then they turn off all the lights and reopen their eyes to "enter the year with a new light". In Italy, a lentil stew is eaten when bell tolls midnight, one spoonful per bell. This is supposed to bring good fortune; the round lentils represent coins. In Romania, children sing traditional carols that wish goodwill, happiness and success. A common tradition in Russia is to "say farewell to the old year" by remembering the most important events of the last twelve months. In Scotland, people practice First-Footing, which involves friends or family members going to each other's houses with a gift of whisky and sometimes a lump of coal. Serbs decorate trees at New Year's, rather than at Christmas. Near, or after midnight, "Father Frost" visits houses and leaves presents under the tree, to be unpacked then or to be discovered in the morning. Even though Turkish people generally don't celebrate Christmas, decorating Christmas trees is a very popular tradition on New Year's Eve in Turkey. New Year is often considered a "pre-celebration" for Greek Catholics and Eastern Orthodox living in Eastern Europe, primarily in Ukraine, since Christmas is celebrated on January 7. In Wales, it is customary to give gifts of bread and cheese. Argentines celebrate New Year's by swimming in rivers and lakes or public pools. In Brazil, New Year's marks the start of the summer holidays, and those spending that evening at the beach usually dress in white, to bring good luck into the new year. In Costa Rica it is a popular tradition to run across the street with luggage to bring new trips and adventures in the upcoming year. In Ecuador it is a tradition for some men to dress as women the days before new Year's Eve representing the "widow" of the year that has passed. In Australia, each year, the celebrations in Sydney are accompanied by a theme with two pyrotechnic shows, the 9:00 pm Family Fireworks and the Midnight Fireworks. Next to fireworks, trumpets are the most important elements of New Year's Eve for Indonesians. In Japan, New Year's Eve is used to prepare for and welcome Toshigami, the New Year's god. Buddhist temples ring their bells 108 times at midnight, expelling the 108 mental states that lead people to take unwholesome actions. In the Philippines, many opt to wear new, bright, or colourful clothes with circular patterns, such as polka dots, or display sweets and twelve round fruits as the centrepiece, in the belief that circles attract money and fortune and that candies represent a sweeter year ahead. At and after midnight one can greet: "HAPPY NEW YEAR!"

# 365 days in 2017 to celebrate and to connect

**National Days around the world:** [http://www.nsw.com.au/regional/national\\_days.html](http://www.nsw.com.au/regional/national_days.html),

see also: <http://www.mapsofworld.com/national-day.html>, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_national\\_independence\\_days](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_national_independence_days)

## January

- 1 Cuba: Liberation Day
- 1 Haiti: Independence Day
- 1 Sudan: National Day
- 4 Myanmar: Independence Day
- 9 Northern Mariana Islands: National Day
- 13 Togo: Togolais Day
- 26 Australia: Australia Day
- 31 Nauru: National Day

## February

- 4 Sri Lanka: Independence Commemoration Day
- 6 New Zealand: Waitangi Day
- 7 Grenada: Independence Day
- 11 Iran: Victory of the Islamic Revolution in Iran
- 15 Canada: Canada Day
- 16 Lithuania: Independence Day
- 18 Gambia: National Day
- 23 Brunei Darussalam: Independence Day
- 22 St Lucia: National Day
- 23 Guyana: National Day
- 24 Estonia: Independence Day
- 25 Kuwait: National Day
- 27 Dominican Republic: Independence Day

## March

- 1 Bosnia & Herzegovina: National Day
- 3 Bulgaria: National Day
- 6 Ghana: Independence Day
- 12 Mauritius: National Day
- 17 Ireland: St Patrick's Day
- 20 Tunisia: Anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of Tunisia
- 21 Namibia: Independence Day
- 25 Greece: Independence Day
- 26 Bangladesh: Independence Day

## April

- 4 Senegal: Independence Day
- 16 Denmark: Queen's Birthday
- 17 Syria: National Day
- 18 Zimbabwe: National Day
- 19 Sierra Leone: Republic Day
- 26 Tanzania: Independence Day
- 26 Yugoslavia: Constitution Day (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia)
- 27 South Africa: Freedom Day
- 28 Afghanistan: Victory of the Afghan Jihad
- 30 The Netherlands: Official Birthday of HM Queen Beatrix

## May

- 1 Marshall Islands: National Day
- 3 Poland: National Day
- 9 European Union: European Day
- 12 Israel: Independence Day
- 14 Paraguay: National Day
- 17 Norway: Constitution Day
- 20 Cameroon: National Day
- 22 Yemen: National Day
- 24 Eritrea: Independence Day
- 25 Argentina: National Day
- 25 Jordan: Independence Day
- 26 Georgia: National Day
- 28 Azerbaijan: National Day
- 28 Ethiopia: National Day
- 30 Croatia: Statehood Day

## June

- 1 Western Samoa: Independence Day
- 2 Italy: Foundation of the Republic
- 4 Tonga: Emancipation Day
- 6 Sweden: National Day
- 10 Portugal: Portugal Day, Camoes Day & Day of Portuguese Communities
- 12 Philippines: Independence Day
- 12 Russia: National Day

## June (continued)

- 17 Iceland: National Day
- 18 Seychelles: National Day
- 23 Luxembourg: National Day & Official Birthday of HRH the Grand Duke
- 25 Mozambique: Independence Day
- 25 Slovenia: National Day
- 26 Madagascar: National Day
- 27 Djibouti: National Day
- 30 Congo (Dem Rep): Independence Day

## July

- 1 Burundi: National Day
- 1 Canada: Canada Day
- 3 Belarus: National Day
- 4 United States of America: Independence Day
- 5 Cape Verde: National Day
- 5 Rwanda: Independence Day
- 5 Venezuela: National Day 6 Comoros: National Day
- 6 Malawi: National Day
- 7 Solomon Islands: National Day
- 10 Bahamas: Independence Day
- 11 Mongolia: Anniversary of the Mongolian People's Revolution
- 12 Kiribati: National Day
- 12 Sao Tome & Principe: National Day
- 14 France: Bastille Day
- 17 Iraq: National Day
- 20 Colombia: National Day
- 21 Belgium: Accession of King Leopold I (1831)
- 23 Egypt: Anniversary of the Revolution of 23rd July
- 26 Liberia: National Day
- 26 Maldives: National Day
- 28 Peru: Independence Day
- 30 Morocco: Fête Du Trône
- 30 Vanuatu: Independence Day

## August

- 1 Benin: National Day
- 1 Switzerland: Foundation of the Swiss Confederation
- 4 Burkina Faso: National Day
- 4 Cook Islands: National Day 5 Jamaica: National Day
- 6 Bolivia: Independence Day
- 9 Singapore: National Day
- 10 Ecuador: National Day

## August (continued)

- 11 Chad: National Day
- 14 Pakistan: Independence Day
- 15 Congo (Rep): National Day
- 15 India: National Day
- 15 South Korea: National Day (Republic of Korea)
- 15 Liechtenstein: National Day
- 17 Gabon: National Day
- 17 Indonesia: Proclamation of Independence
- 20 Hungary: National Day
- 24 Ukraine: National Day
- 25 Uruguay: Independence Day
- 27 Moldova: National Day
- 31 Kyrgyzstan: National Day
- 31 Malaysia: National Day
- 31 Trinidad and Tobago: National Day

## September

- 1 Slovakia: Constitution Day
- 1 Uzbekistan: National Day
- 2 Libya: National Day
- 2 Vietnam: Proclamation of Independence
- 3 Qatar: National Day
- 3 San Marino: National Foundation Day
- 6 Swaziland: National Day
- 7 Brazil: Independence Day
- 8 Andorra: National Day
- 8 The Independence Day, Republic of Macedonia
- 9 North Korea: National Day (Democratic People's Republic of Korea)
- 9 Tajikistan: National Day
- 15 Costa Rica: Independence Day
- 15 El Salvador: Independence Day
- 15 Guatemala: Independence Day
- 15 Honduras: Independence Day
- 15 Nicaragua: Independence Day
- 16 Mexico: Proclamation Day
- 16 Papua New Guinea: Independence Day
- 18 Chile: National Anniversary
- 19 St Kitts Nevis: Independence Day
- 21 Armenia: National Day
- 21 Belize: National Day
- 21 Malta: Independence Day
- 22 Mali: Independence Day
- 23 Saudi Arabia: National Day
- 24 Guinea Bissau: National Day
- 30 Botswana: National Day

## October

- 1 China: National Day
- 1 Cyprus: National Day
- 1 Nigeria: Republic Day 1 Palau: National Day
- 1 Tuvalu: Independence Day
- 2 Guinea: National Day
- 3 Germany: National Day
- 4 Lesotho: National Day
- 9 Uganda: Independence Day
- 10 Taiwan: National Day 10 Fiji: National Day
- 12 Equatorial Guinea: National Day
- 12 Spain: National Day
- 19 Niue: National Day
- 21 Somalia: The Twenty-First of October Revolution
- 22 Holy See: Anniversary, Pontifical Ministry of HH Pope John Paul II
- 24 Zambia: Independence Day
- 26 Austria: National Day
- 27 St Vincent and the Grenadines: National Day
- 27 Turkmenistan: National Day
- 28 Czech Republic: National Day
- 29 Turkey: Republic Day

## November

- 1 Algeria: Anniversary of the Revolution
- 1 Antigua & Barbuda: National Day
- 3 Dominica: National Day
- 3 Federated States of Micronesia: National Day
- 3 Panama: National Day
- 9 Cambodia: Independence Day
- 11 Angola: National Day
- 18 Latvia: Proclamation of Independence
- 18 Oman: National Day
- 19 Monaco: National Day
- 22 Lebanon: Independence Day
- 25 Suriname: National Day
- 28 Mauritania: National Day 29 Albania: National Day
- 30 Barbados: Independence Day

## December

- 1 Central African Republic: National Day
- 1 Romania: National Day
- 2 Laos: National Day
- 2 United Arab Emirates: National Day
- 5 Thailand: The King's Birthday Anniversary
- 6 Finland: Independence Day
- 7 Côte d'Ivoire: National Day
- 12 Kenya: Jamhuri Day
- 16 Bahrain: National Day
- 16 Kazakhstan: National Day
- 17 Bhutan: National Day
- 18 Niger: National Day
- 23 Japan: Emperor's Birthday
- 28 Nepal: King's Birthday and National Day

## Links on holidays in the world:

- <http://www.kleiner-kalender.de/event/nationaler-nichts-tag/54063.html>
- <http://kurier.at/kult/aktionstage-wenn-jeder-tag-zum-feiertag-wird/3.127.081/slideshow#3127081,3126952>
- [http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liste\\_von\\_Gedenk-\\_und\\_Aktionstagen](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liste_von_Gedenk-_und_Aktionstagen)
- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_International\\_observances](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_International_observances)
- <http://www.interfaith-calendar.org>