

CELEBRATE NEW YEAR'S DAY ALL YEAR LONG

By Heidi Lyn Rao



January 1st of every year is the start of the new year for most of the people around the world. Many believe it is a time of renewal, throw the yoke off from the previous year, and start anew in relationships, business, and personal well-being. New Year's Day is the beginning of a do-over and a chance to improve from the mistakes from the previous 365 days. This is easy to see in the faces of most people because of their feeling of optimism.

The traditional way that we improve the things in our lives that need work is through New Year Resolutions. Unfortunately, many of these resolutions are broken quickly. Some only make it an hour or two while others extend further in the year. Many times, the resolutions that make it further into the year occur because the individual who made the promise to themselves starts adding caveats and carveouts that allow for some very broad exceptions.

Keeping your New Year's Resolution is not that hard to keep if you know the secret. If you are the type that year after year you consistently break the promise to yourself because 365 days is just too long, then why not have more than one New Year's Day every year? There are 26 New Year's Days celebrated around the world, so why not make the calendar work for you? That means you have 26 chances to keep your New Year's Resolution each year!

January

January 1st is the internationally recognized New Year's Day based on the Gregorian Calander and celebrated by most of the countries in the world, including the United States. It is celebrated with fireworks and parties.

January 1st is the day Russia celebrates the Russian New Year. This holiday is called Novy God. During the Soviet Union era, Christmas was removed from the calendar, so those festivities shifted to Novy God including the children being visited by their version of Santa Clause, Ded Moroz meaning Father Frost.

January 1st is the Japanese New Year celebrated in Japan. This holiday is known as Shogatsu, and is celebrated with traditional foods such as prawns, rice cakes, and noodles.

January 14th is the Eastern Orthodox Church's New Year's Day celebrated in Russia, Macedonia, Serbia, and Ukraine. This holiday includes dancing, parties, fireworks, alcohol, and large feasts.

January 21st through February 20th is China's traditional New Year's Celebration. The Chinese celebration is known as Chun jie. This holiday falls on different days each year because it is based on the lunar calendar. The holiday lasts for seven days but it is traditionally celebrated for two weeks. It starts on the Lunar New Year's Eve and goes on for 15 days. It is celebrated by traditional foods, dragon dances, and ends with the Festival of Lanterns.

January 21st through February 20th is the Vietnamese New Year's Holiday. This celebration is known as Tet. Like the Chinese New Year, this holiday falls on different days each year because it is based on the lunar calendar. This holiday is celebrated by beating drums and lighting incense to remember the dead.

February

February 5th is the Korean New Year celebrated in Korea. This holiday is called Sollal and is based on the lunar calendar. Koreans dress in traditional costumes and ring the Boshingak Bell, which was built in 1396 and only rung on New Year's.

February 16th is the Mongolian New Year observed in Mongolia. This celebration is known as Tsagaan and is a time to renew relationships with family and friends, pay off debts, and end arguments.

February 20th marks the end of the Chinese New Year and the Vietnamese Tet holiday.

Mid-February hosts the Igbo New Year in Nigeria and is celebrated much like the Chinese, Korean, and Indian New Year's.

March

March 7th is the Balinese New Year observed by Indonesia. This holiday is known as Nyepi. During Nyepi, no one participates in any activity but spends the day reflecting in complete silence for the entire day.

March 21st is the date of the Iranian New Year celebrated by the peoples of Iran. This holiday is known as Nowruz, which is a combination of two Persian words meaning New Day. One of the traditions that Iranians participate in is placing a mirror on their table to remind people to reflect on their past year.

March 22nd is the Hindu New Years celebrated in India and by Hindus worldwide. The name of this holiday is Vikram Sawant and is celebrated by exchanging gifts, decorating homes, lighting oil lamps, and donning new clothes.

April

April 1st is the Assyrian New Year celebrated in different regions of Iraq, Syria, Turkey, and Iran. The name of the Holiday is Kha b' Nissan and means the First of April. The celebration involves dancing, parties, parades, picking flowers and decorating the house with herbs.

April 13th and 14th is when the country of Sri Lanka celebrates their New Year's Holiday. This celebration is called Aluth Avurudda. During this celebration family, friends, and others in the community get together and boil milk in a new clay pot until it boils over. This tradition symbolizes prosperity. Another part of this tradition is to make sweets from rice and coconut oil. Traditional dishes are also made of plantains.

April 13th, 14th, and 15th is the Thai New Year observed in Thailand. This holiday is known as Songkran, meaning "passing." This is celebrated by gently pouring water on the elders and statues of Buddha as a sign of respect.

April 13th, 14th, and 15th is when the country of Cambodia observes their New Year's Celebration. The Cambodian New Year's celebration is known as Chol Chnam Thmey. This time is devoted to playing traditional games with family and friends. The Cambodian peoples visit temples for purification ceremonies.

April 14th is the Tamil New Year observed in Southern India and Sri Lanka. This holiday is called Puthandu and based on the Tamil Solar Calendar. The day before Puthandu, a tray with various fruits is prepared then eaten the next day. Tamilians then bathe and go to the temple for blessings.

April 14th is the Bengali New Year celebrated in Bangladesh. This holiday is known as Pahela Baishakh. Festivals and street parties are common during this celebration with sweet treats given out to partygoers.

April 14th is the Pakistani New Year observed in Pakistan. This holiday is known as Vaisakhi and was established in 1699. During this time, holy songs are read from the Shikh holy book.

April 15th is the Bengali New Year celebrated in India. This holiday is known as Pahela Baishakh. Festivals and street parties are common during this celebration with sweet treats given out to partygoers.

April 15th is the Burmese New Year celebrated in Myanmar. This holiday is known as Thingyan. Thingyan lasts for 3-4 days and is celebrated with water. This is done with water guns, buckets, or anything else that can be used to throw water on partygoers.

September

September 11th is when the country of Ethiopia celebrates their New Year's Celebration. This holiday is called Entutatash and marks the end of the rainy season; an explosion of yellow daisies blanket the countryside. The Ethiopian language is called Amharic and Entutatash means gift of jewels in reference to the blooming flowers. This day is marked with songs, eating, drinking, and the exchange of flower bouquets.

September 22nd is the Islamic New Year in Muslim countries. This holiday is called Hijri and it marks the prophet Muhammad's trip from Mecca to Medina. This holiday is celebrated differently between the branches of Islam. Most participate in pilgrimages and fasting.

September 29th is the Jewish New Year celebrated by Jewish people worldwide. This holiday is called Rosh Hashanah. Rosh Hashanah is traditionally celebrated by blowing the ram's horn called shofar, and enjoying traditional Jewish foods and sweets.

October

October 30th is when the Western Australia's Aboriginal tribe of the Murado peoples celebrates their New Year's Celebration. This is just one of the many festivals celebrating the Murado Tribe and its customs throughout Australia.

Mid-October through mid-November is when the Marwari and Gujarati New Year's Celebration occurs in India. This celebration is known officially as Diwali but is unofficially known as the Festival of Lights. Celebrations last for five days based on the moon's cycle. The festivities start two days prior to New Year's and three days after. The third day is the most important, New Year's Day, and is called Diwali. During the holiday, candles are placed in homes and the inhabitants say special prayers to gods and goddesses.

Happy New Year!