Celebrations, Holidays, & Traditions for January 2008

January 1:

New Year’s Day: 1st day of the year celebrated by the United States (US) and many countries around the world (Public Holiday)

Liberation Day: (Cuba)- Cuba’s commemoration of the revolution of 1959, led by Fidel Castro

Republic Day: (Taiwan)- Taiwan’s official “birthday” of Asia’s 1st democratic republic, The Republic of China

Independence Day: (Haiti)- Haiti gained its independence from France and made history by being the first Black Country to gain its independence on January 1, 1804

Independence Day: (Sudan & Egypt)- On January 1, 1956, Egypt and Britain signed a treaty guaranteeing Sudanese independence

January 2:

Founder’s Day- (Haiti)-

Saint Berchtolds’ Day- (Liechtenstein, Switzerland)-

January 4:

Martyr’s Day: (Angola, Congo (Dem. Rep.))- Commemoration of Martyrs of Independence

Independence Day: (Myanmar)- commemorates the day in 1810 when Miguel Hidalgo, a parish priest, issued a declaration of Mexico's freedom from the rule of Spain. It is a national holiday and is celebrated with parades, feasting, fireworks, and dancing
**January 6:**

**Epiphany:** (Andorra, Austria, Finland, Germany, Greece, Italy, Puerto Rico, Spain, Sweden, Uruguay, Venezuela, and many others) - Christian feast day which celebrates the "shining forth" or revelation of God in human form in the person of Jesus Christ.

**Armenia Christmas:** (Armenia) - The Armenian church remained outside of the Roman Empire's influence and to this day maintains its ancient tradition of celebrating both the birth and baptism of Christ on Jan. 6.

**Dia de los Reyes:** (Hispanic Christian) - In Mexico and other Spanish-speaking countries, children receive Christmas gifts from los reyes magos - the three wise men.

**January 7:**

**Orthodox Christmas:** (Belarus, Bosnia, and Herzegovina, Georgia, Moldova, Montenegro, Russia, Ukraine, West Bank) - Christmas, along with other religious celebrations, was banned throughout Russia after the 1917 Revolution. In 1992, some 75 years later, Christmas could once again be openly observed.

**Coptic Christmas:** (Egypt, Sudan) - Coptic Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ on January 7th, a date equivalent to the 29th day of the Coptic month of "kiohk.”

**Victory Day:** (Cambodia) - Celebration of the 1979 invasion and occupation of Cambodia by Vietnam.

**Epiphany (Dia de los Reyes Magos-Three Kings Day):** (Colombia) - A Christian feast twelve days after Christmas; celebrating the visit of the three wise men to the baby Jesus.

**Feast of the Nativity:** (Orthodox Christian) - A feast commemorating the Baptism of Our Lord in the Jordan River.
January 8:

**Orthodox Christmas**: (Bosnia, Herzegovina, and Moldova)- the day of honoring and celebrating the birth of Jesus of Nazareth

**Ethiopian Christmas (Ganna)**: (Ethiopia)- celebrates the birth of Jesus in ancient and modern churches designed in three concentric circles; males sit separately from the females during the ceremony and celebration

**Kayin New Year**: (Myanmar)- a national holiday celebrated with religious and traditional festivals

**New Year’s Holiday**: (Russia)- a public holiday celebrated with large meals and elaborate festivities

January 9:

**Republic Day**: (Bosnia and Herzegovina)- On January 9, 1992, Bosnian Serb authorities declared creation of Serbian Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina

**Martyr's Day**: (Panama)- commemorates the January 9, 1964 riots over sovereignty of the Panama Canal. The riot started after a Panamanian flag was torn during conflict between Panamanian students and Canal Zone Police officers, over the right of the Panamanian flag to be flown alongside the U.S. Flag

January 10:

**Islamic New Year (Muharram)**: (Algeria, Argentina, Bahrain, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Niger, Oman, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, West Bank, Western Sahara, Yemen)- cultural event which Muslims partake on the first day of Muharram, the first month in the Islamic calendar. Many Muslims use the day to remember the significance of this month, and the Hijra, or emigration, Prophet Muhammad made to the city now known as Medina
January 11:

**Independence Manifesto Day:** (Morocco, Western Sahara)- celebrates the declaration of independence from France in 1944

January 13:

**Democracy Day:** (Cape Verde)- In 1991, Cape Verde became a democratic state

**Liberation Day:** (Togo)- marks the liberation of Togo

**Baptism of the Lord Jesus:** (Christian)- commemorates the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River by John the Baptist

January 14:

**Orthodox New Year's Day:** (Georgia, Russia, Ukraine)- celebrated on January 13/14 in the 20th and 21st centuries

**Makara Sankranti:** (India)- celebrated to mark the beginning of the harvesting season in India. Celebrated for three days. During this time, the cultural supremacy of the state comes to the forefront as every place is Andhra Pradesh reflects the festive spirit

**De Hostos Day:** (Puerto Rico)- Commonwealth of Puerto Rico official holiday. In recent years it is celebrated on the 2nd Monday of January. Eugenio de María de Hostos (1839-1903) was a writer and statesman who struggled for Puerto Rican independence and the end to slavery in the late 19th century

January 16:

**Hero’s Day:** (Congo (Dem. Rep.))

**La Paz Day:** (El Salvador)
January 18:

Tassua: (Iran)

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (January 18-15): (Christian)- during this week Christians pray for the restoration of unity between churches of the Christian faith

January 19:

Ashura: (Afghanistan, Algeria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Gambia, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Senegal) - the day of Ashura or the tenth day of the first Islamic month is observed by Muslims as a whole. Shia Muslims observe Ashura to mark the martyrdom of Hussain. This day also commemorates the day when Noah left the ark, and when Moses was saved from the Egyptians by God

January 21:

Martin Luther King Day: (American Samoa, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, United States, Virgin Islands)- commemorates the birth of Martin Luther King Jr. who was born on January 15, 1929. One of the world’s best known advocates of non-violent social change, King was the recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in December of 1964. He was assassinated on April 4, 1968, and remains a symbol of struggle for civil rights

Lady of Altagracia Day: (Dominican Republic)- celebrates the Most Blessed Virgin

January 22:

Unification Day: (Ukraine)- On January 22, 1919, the union of the Ukrainian People and the West Ukrainian People Republics became a single Ukrainian unified state
**January 26:**

*Australia Day:* (Australia, Norfolk Island)- biggest day of celebration in the country and is observed as a public holiday in all states and territories. The nation celebrates the great things about Australia and being Australian.

*Republic Day:* (India)- the constitution of India came into force and India became a truly sovereign state. In this day India became a totally republican unit. The country finally realized the dream of Mahatma Gandhi and the numerous freedom fighters who, fought for and sacrificed their lives for the Independence of their country. So, the 26th of January was decreed a national holiday and has been recognized and celebrated as the Republic Day of India.

*Umuganda Day:* (Rwanda)- a nation wide community program implemented by local government ministry, to keep the capital Kigali and its vicinity clean.

*Liberation Day:* (Uganda)-

**January 27:**

*Saint Sava’s Day:* (Bosnia and Herzegovina)- Saint Sava is considered the founder of the independent Serbian Orthodox Church and Serbian Orthodox Christians celebrate him as patron saint of education and medicine. He is commemorated on January 27 according to the Julian calendar and on January 14 according to the Gregorian calendar.

*Australia Day:* (Australia)- biggest day of celebration in the country and is observed as a public holiday in all states and territories. The nation celebrates the great things about Australia and being Australian.

**January 30:**

*Sahid Diwash (Martyr’s Day):* (Nepal)- commemmorating those immortal heroes who sacrificed their lives for the sake of freedom and democracy in the country.

*Independence Day:* (Nauru)- 40 years ago today the small island of Nauru was granted its independence from Australia.

**January 31:**

*Independence Day:* Nauru- 40 years ago today the small island of Nauru was granted its independence from Australia.
Celebrations, Holidays, & Traditions for February 2008

*Black History Month*

**February 2:**

**Groundhog Day:** (United States/Canada)- recognizing the old belief that if the sun shines on Candlemans Day, or if the groundhog sees its shadow when it emerges from its den, we will experience six more weeks of winter

**Carnival:** (Brazil, Panama)- festival season that occurs immediately before Lent. involves a public celebration or parade combining some elements of a circus and public street party. People often dress up/masquerade during the celebrations. The world's largest carnival celebration is held in Brazil

**February 3:**

**Transfiguration Sunday:** (Christian)- commemorates Jesus’ experience on Mount Tabor when his physical appearance became radiant as his connection with traditional Jewish holy figures became obvious to the disciples

**February 4:**

**Carnival:** (Andorra, Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, Luxembourg, Panama, Uruguay, and Venezuela)- a festival season that occurs immediately before Lent. involves a public celebration or parade combining some elements of a circus and public street party. People often dress up/masquerade during the celebrations

**Liberation Day:** (Angola)-

**Carnival Monday:** (Aruba, Dominica, French Guiana, Guadeloupe, Haiti, Trinidad, and Tobago)- a festival season that occurs immediately before Lent

**Constitution Day:** (Mexico) - a holiday to honor the Political Constitution of the United Mexican States of 1917. This is presently Mexico’s constitution

**National Day:** (Sri Lanka)-
**February 5:**

**Carnival:** (Brazil, Ecuador, and Uruguay)- a festival season that occurs immediately before Lent

**Unity Day:** (Burundi)- a public holiday to celebrate the start of a transition to democracy 8 years ago that led to the country’s first freely elected president, Melchior Ndadaye

**Carnival Tuesday:** (Dominica, Trinidad, and Tobago)- a festival season that occurs immediately before Lent

**Mardi Gras (French for Fat Tuesday):** (French Guiana, Guadeloupe, Haiti, Panama) - the day before Ash Wednesday and the final day of carnival. The most famous cities known for their Mardi Gras celebrations are New Orleans, Louisiana; Mobile, Alabama; Venice, Italy; Sydney, Australia; France; and Rio de Janiero, Brazil

**Kashmir Day:** (Pakistan)- marks the day that everyone in Pakistan marches in the streets in “solidarity” with the “freedom fighters” in Kashmir and their quest for “independence”

**Shrove Tuesday:** (Portugal)- the last day before Lent. Many people celebrate this day or days prior to it by having carnivals such as Mardi Gras. In England it became known as “Shrove Tuesday” because people went to church to “shrove” or “confess” their sins

**Liberation Day/Saint Agatha’s Day:** (San Marino)- the anniversary of the liberation of San Marino from occupation by the invading forces of Cardinal Alberoni in 1739. The day is also dedicated to Saint Agatha, the "co-patron" of the city
February 6:

Ash Wednesday: (Brazil, Cayman Islands, Guadeloupe, Haiti, Jamaica, and Panama)- marks the beginning of the 40 day season of Lent; the time that Jesus spent in the wilderness. Ashes are typically used to mark worshippers to show atonement and remorse.

Waitangi Day: (New Zealand, Niue, Tokelau)- public holiday to celebrate the Treaty of Waitangi established British sovereignty over New Zealand.

Seollal: (South Korea)- Lunar New Year’s Day is one of the most important traditional events of the year in South Korea, more significant than January 1st.

Chinese New Year’s Eve: (Taiwan)- the day before the lunar new year and the most significant festival for ethnic Chinese in the world. The celebrations are typically several days, the festival is about three weeks long.

Tet Eve: (Vietnam)- a colorful family occasion, Tet, or Chinese New Year, marks the most important time of year for the people of Vietnam. Tet means "festival of the first day" and celebrations take place for weeks leading up to the last day of the lunar year.

February 7:

Chinese New Year: (China, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand)- According to the lunar calendar of 2008, it marks the “Year of the Rat”

Independence Day: (Grenada)- In 1974, Grenada gained full independence from Britain becoming the smallest independent country in the Western Hemisphere.

Tet (Vietnamese New Year): (Vietnam)- a colorful family occasion, Tet, or Chinese New Year, marks the most important time of year for the people of Vietnam. Tet means "festival of the first day" and celebrations take place for weeks leading up to the last day of the lunar year.

February 10:

Chinese New Year 2008 Golden Week Holiday: (China)- in the mainland of the People’s Republic of China was the name given to three annual 7-day national holidays, implemented in 2000. Chinese people currently enjoy 10 days of legal holidays Three days each are given for the May Day, National Day and Spring Festival breaks, and one day for New Year's Day.
**February 11:**

**Youth Day:** (Cameroon) - a national holiday to observe the birthday of Swami Vivekananda, one of the most famous and influential spiritual leaders in India. Youth Day is observed all over India at schools and colleges with processions, speeches, music, and competitions in essay-writing.

**Vasant Panchami:** (India) - celebrates spring, or Basant, and Sarasvati, the Hindu goddess of learning and the arts. This is the time when some children begin learning the 50 letters used in the Sanskrit alphabet.

**Revolution Day:** (Iran) - In 1979, Iran was transformed from a monarchy to Islamic Republic.

**Foundation Day:** (Japan) - a national holiday to celebrate the founding of the nation and the imperial line by its mythical first emperor, Jimmu, who established his capital in Yamato.

**Armed Forces Day:** (Liberia) - a day to recognize the military of Liberia.

**February 12:**

**Lincoln’s Birthday:** (United States) - the birthday of President Abraham Lincoln.

**Union Day:** Myanmar

**February 14:**

**St. Valentine’s Day:** United States - a celebration nearly all over the world by the exchange of gifts that convey affection and love.

**February 15:**

**Liberation Day:** (Afghanistan) - commemoration of mujahidin struggle against Soviet occupation and withdrawal of Soviet Troops in 1989.

**National Day:** (Serbia) - statehood day in Serbia.

**Nirvana:** Buddhist - celebrated by some Buddhists on Feb 8. Commemorates Buddha’s death when he reached the zenith of Nirvana, at the age of 80.
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<th><strong>February 16:</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Independence Day:</strong> (Lithuania) - In 1918, gained independence from Russia and Germany</td>
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<th><strong>February 18:</strong></th>
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<td><strong>President’s Day:</strong> American Samoa, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, United States, Virgin Islands (US) - a day to celebrate and honor Presidents Washington and Lincoln. Today it is a day to recognize the contributions of all Presidents</td>
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<td><strong>Prajatantra Diwash (Democracy Day):</strong> (Nepal) - observed as a vow to end any form of autocratic rule</td>
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<td><strong>Shaheed Day:</strong> (Bangladesh) - observed with great solemnity, starting from midnight to remember the students and youth protesters whom lost their lives while protesting against the imposition of Urdu by the then government as the lone state language of Pakistan</td>
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| **Makha Bucha:** (Thailand) - religious holiday that marks four events that took place during Lord Buddha’s lifetime |

| **Meak Bochea Day:** (Cambodia) - commemorates the spontaneous gathering of monks to listen to the Buddha’s preaching |

| **Guru Ravidas Jayanti:** (India) - Ravidas was a great saint, who symbolized social unity and equality. Guru Ravidas was born in a village near Varanasi in 1376 |

| **Lini Day:** (Vanuatu) - commemorates Father Lini |
February 22:

**Independence Day:** (St. Lucia)- In 1979, gained independence from Great Britain

**Washington’s Birthday:** (United States)- a federal public holiday to observe the birthday of the 1st American President(1789-97), affectionately called, the father of his country

February 23:

**Republic Day:** (Guyana)- Commemorates the anniversary of the establishment as a sovereign democratic state within the British Commonwealth in 1970

**Defender’s Day** (Kyrgyzstan, Russia)- a day Russia honors those who are presently serving in the Armed Forces and those who have served in the past. During the era of the Soviet Union, it was called "Red Army Day

**Maha Shivaratri** (Nepal)- a Hindu festival celebrated every year the most significant practices on this day are offerings of Bael (Bilva) leaves to the Lord Shiva, fasting and all night long vigil many people consume bhang lassi, which they believe is lord Shiva's favorite drink

February 24:

**Independence Day:** (Estonia)- In 1918, gained independence from Bolshevist Russia

February 25:

**National Day:** (Kuwait)- celebrates the creation of Kuwait as a nation in 1961
February 26:

**Liberation Day**- (Kuwait)- celebrates the liberation of Kuwait by a multi-national force from seven months of traumatic Iraqi occupation on February 26, 1991

**Magal de Touba**- (Senegal)- celebration commemorating the return from exile of Mouridism’s founder Cheikh Amadou Bamba

**Intercalary Days**- (Baha’i)- an insertion of a leap day into the calendar to make the calendar follow the seasons or moon phases

February 27:

**Independence Day**- (Dominican Republic)- In 1844, gained independence from Haiti

February 28:

**Memorial Day**- (Taiwan)-

February 29:

**Memorial Day**- (Marshall Islands)-
Celebrations, Holidays, & Traditions for March 2008

*Women’s History Month (US)  
*Irish- American Heritage Month (US)

**March 1:**

**Independence Day:** (Bosnia and Herzegovina)- In 1992, gained independence from the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

**Memorial Day:** (Marshall Islands)-

**Yap Day:** (Micronesia)- a way of celebrating dance and is a form of competition between Yapese villages

**March 2:**

**Adwa Victory Day:** (Ethiopia)- a holiday to celebrate the Ethiopian defeat over the Italians in 1896, which made Ethiopia the “only” African country not to be colonized by Europe

**Meatfare Sunday:** (Orthodox Christian)- observed two weeks before the start of Lent to prepare the faithful for the resurrection of Christ and the last day for the eating of meat before Lent

**March 3:**

**Liberation Day (National Day):** (Bulgaria)- a day to celebrate the signing of the Peace Treaty of San Stefano (a tiny town near Istanbul) between Russia and the Ottoman Empire which brought Bulgaria back to the political map

**Mother’s Day:** (Georgia)- day honoring mothers in the Eurasian country

**Martyr’s Day:** (Malawi)- During an uprising against the Federation in 1959 forty people lost their lives. These people are remembered on 3 March every year on Martyr’s Day

**March 6:**

**Independence Day:** (Ghana)- In 1957, Ghana was the first black African country to become independent
March 8:

**Women’s Day:** (Angola, Armenia, Cambodia, Cameroon, Laos, Madagascar, Moldova, Mongolia, Nepal, Russia, Uganda, Ukraine, Zambia)- a day honoring women and observing the multi-faith tradition since 1887, celebrated on the first Friday in March

March 9:

**Passion Sunday:** (Christian)- the 5th Sunday in Lent

March 10:

**Commonwealth Day:** (British Virgin Islands, and many others)- annual celebration of the Commonwealth of Nations marked by a multi-faith service in Westminster Abbey, normally attended by Queen Elizabeth II. The Queen delivers an address to the Commonwealth, broadcast throughout the world

**Ash Monday:** (Cyprus, Greece)- a public holiday in Greece and Cyprus, also known as Clean Monday. It is celebrated with outdoor excursions, the consumption of shellfish and other fasting food, and the widespread custom of flying kites

**Lent Begins:** (Orthodox Christian)- a time of forgiveness for pain and offenses

March 11:

**Independence Restoration Day:** (Lithuania)- In 1918, gained independence from Russia & Germany

March 14:

**Constitution Day:** (Andorra)- the day the Constitution of this country was drafted and signed in 1993
### March 15:

**Revolution Day**: (Hungary)- one of the most prominent National Holidays in Hungary to commemorate the Revolution and the following War of Independence against the Austrian-Habsburg rule in 1848-49

### March 16:

**Palm Sunday**: (Christian)- the Sunday before Easter

**Orthodox Sunday**: (Orthodox Christian)- the Sunday before Easter

### March 17:

**St. Patrick’s Day**: (Ireland, Montserrat, United Kingdom, United States)- an annual feast day which celebrates Saint Patrick, one of the patron saints of Ireland

**Benito Juarez Day**: (Mexico)- regarded as Mexico’s greatest and most beloved leader. He was also the first Mexican leader who did not have a military background, and the first full-blooded indigenous national to serve as President of Mexico, and the first to lead an American country in more than 300 years

### March 18:

**St. Joseph’s Day**: (Vatican City, Liechtenstein, Malta, Spain, Switzerland)- a day to honor Joseph, spouse of Mary and father of Jesus, by having a feast without meat since it is during Lent

### March 20:

**Noruz (Persian New Year)**: (Afghanistan, Iran, and many others)- the traditional Persian/Iranian new year holiday celebrating the first day of spring and the beginning of the Persian/Iranian Calendar

**Maundy Thursday**: (Argentina, Mexico, Spain, and many others)- the feast or holy day on the Thursday before Easter that commemorates the Last Supper of Jesus Christ with the Apostles

**Independence Day**: (Tunisia)- In 1956, gained independence from France
March 21:

*Independence Day*: (Namibia) - In 1990, gained independence from South African mandate

*Human Right’s Day*: (South Africa) - a day to recognize and ensure that citizens of South Africa are aware of their human rights. Many of their rights were abused during the Apartheid era, particularly the carnage in Sharpeville in 1960

*Mother’s Day*: (Syria) - a national holiday to honor mothers

*Good Friday*: the Friday before Easter commemorating the crucifixion and death of Jesus at Calvary

March 23:

*Pakistan Day*: (Pakistan) - a day to commemorate the passage of the famous resolution of the All India Muslim League in Lahore in 1940. It is an occasion to educate Pakistanis and non-Pakistanis about the country and share their heritage to promote better understanding and communication between different communities.

*Easter Sunday*: (Christian) - a sacred holiday, one of the most important religious feast in the Christian liturgical year. In modern times, this day celebrates the resurrection of Jesus, which Christians believe occurred on the third day after his crucifixion

March 25:

*Greek Independence Day*: (Cyprus, Greece) - In 1821, gained independence from Ottoman Empire

March 26:

*Independence Day*: (Bangladesh) - Declared independence from Pakistan which led to a nine month war ending in December, 1971.

March 31:

*Islamic Republic Day*: (Iran) - a public holiday to commemorate the day when Iran first became a republic in 1956

*Freedom Day*: (Malta) - the anniversary of the withdrawal of British troops and the Royal Navy from Malta in 1979