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AMERICAN HOLIDAYS

The New Year is a time of friends and family, and parties and fun. A time of fireworks, a time for resolutions, realizations, and a brand new year.



Each year huge crowds of people celebrate New Year's Eve in New York City's Times Square.

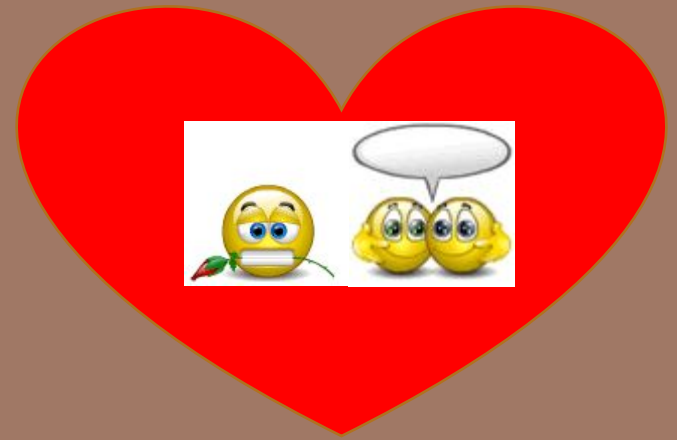
Mardi Gras is a traditional holiday celebrated in many of the southern states of the USA. The most famous celebration takes place in New Orleans, Louisiana. It is celebrated with masquerade balls, King Cakes, and parades.

Did you know that Mardi Gras is French for “Fat Tuesday”?

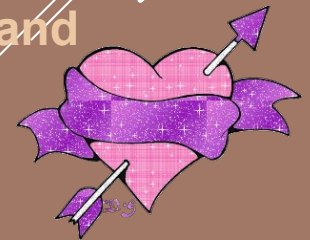
Carnival parades through the streets of New Orleans begin 12 days before Mardi Gras Day.

This year Mardi Gras is celebrated on February 24 (2009)





February 14th is Valentines Day - a worldwide celebration of love and romance, marked by giving red roses and chocolate hearts or by sending valentines.



March 17th marks the celebration of **Saint Patrick's Day**, a traditional feast holiday of praise and thanksgiving for missionaries in Ireland.

Saint Patrick was born to Scottish parents in Roman Britain in approximately 385 CE. As a teenager, he was captured by Druid raiders and sold into slavery in Ireland - then a pagan land ruled by the Druids.

In 433, Patrick is said to have returned to Ireland, this time sent by Pope Celestine, to teach gospel to the Irish people.



Encarta Encyclopedia, ChromoSohm/Joe Sohm

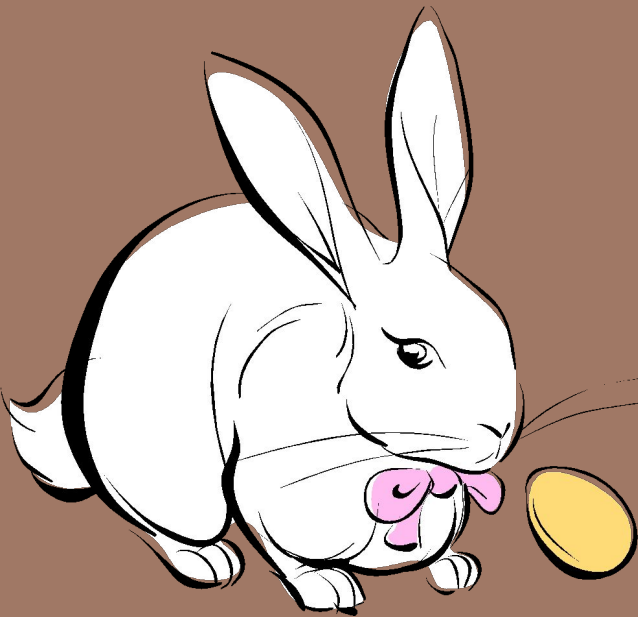
Kiss me, I am Irish!

Legend tells that Patrick used the shamrock to explain the concept of the Holy Trinity, with each leaf representing one of the triad. To this day, the shamrock is an image associated with Saint Patrick and has become the unofficial symbol of St. Patty's Day.



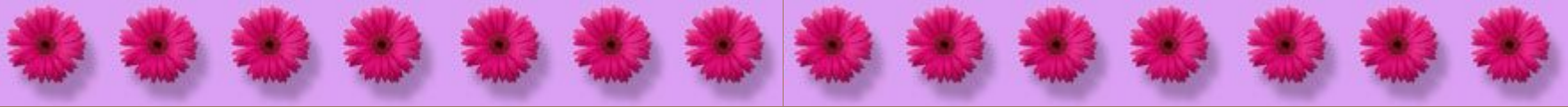


Easter is the time of springtime festivals, a time to welcome back the Tulips, the Crocuses and the Daffodils. Its a time of new suits, new dresses and patent leather shoes. A time for Christians to celebrate the life, death and resurrection of Christ. And a time of *chocolate bunnies* and *colored eggs*!



Traditions associated with the festival survive in the Easter rabbit, a symbol of fertility, and in colored easter eggs, originally painted with bright colors to represent the sunlight of spring, and used in Easter-egg rolling contests or given as gifts.





Mother's Day is a time of commemoration and celebration for Mom. It is a time of breakfast in bed, family gatherings, and crayon scribbled "I Love You's." During the 17th century, those living on the British isles initiated a religious celebration of motherhood, called **Mothering Sunday**, which was held on the fourth Sunday during the Lenten season.

When is Mother's Day?

Mother's Day is celebrated by Americans on the second Sunday in May. **Mothering Sunday** in the UK is celebrated on the 4th Sunday of Lent.



M - O - T - H - E - R

"M" is for the million things she gave me,

"O" means only that she's growing old,

"T" is for the tears she shed to save me,

"H" is for her heart of purest gold;

"E" is for her eyes, with love-light shining,

"R" means right, and right she'll always be,

Put them all together, they spell

"MOTHER,"

A word that means the world to me.

Howard Johnson (c. 1915)

Father's Day is celebrated by Americans on the third Sunday in June.

Father's Day is a day of commemoration and celebration of Dad. It is a day to not only honor your father, but all men who have acted as a father figure in your life - whether as Steppathers, Uncles, Grandfathers, or "Big Brothers."





Happy Birthday America

Independence Day

is the national holiday of the United States of America commemorating the signing of the Declaration of Independence by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.



HALLOWEEN

Halloween is one of the oldest holidays with origins going back thousands of years.

Halloween is celebrated annually on October 31.



**Trick or treat, Smell my feet
Give me something good to eat !!!**



Thanksgiving

The first Thanksgiving took place in December 1621, when the Pilgrims held a three-day feast in Plymouth Rock, Massachusetts to celebrate their bountiful harvest.

Since then it is celebrated on the fourth Thursday of each November as the holiday.



Thanksgiving
Side Dishes



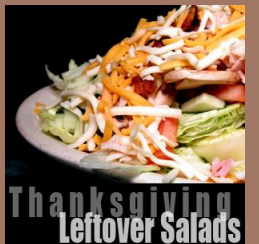
Thanksgiving
Stuffing / Gravy



Thanksgiving
Entrees



Thanksgiving
Leftover Sandwiches



Thanksgiving
Leftover Salads



Thanksgiving
Gravies

Of all the Thanksgiving symbols the Turkey has become the most well known.

CHRISTMAS

Christmas is celebrated annually on December 25.
Christmas Eve on the 24th

There are as many Christmas traditions as
there are families that celebrate this festive
Christian winter holiday.

Christmas Traditions:

The Christmas Tree

The Christmas Stockings

The Christmas Cards

