



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
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2024 RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS AND OBSERVANCES

As an organization dedicated to diversity, inclusion and global strategies, it is important for Y staff to consider religious holidays and observances when planning meetings and special events. Below is a non-comprehensive chart of observancesⁱ from the largest U.S. religious groups (by populationⁱⁱ) to keep in mind as you plan for 2024.

Contact:

For more information or support, please email Y-USA's DIG team at

DIG@ymca.net or connect with us in the [DIG Link community](#).

BA'HA'I		
Naw-Ruz	Tuesday, March 19 through Wednesday, March 20, 2024	Work-Restricted
Ridván	Saturday, April 20 through Thursday, May 2, 2024	Work-Restricted*
Declaration of the Báb	Wednesday, May 22 through Thursday, May 23, 2024	Work-Restricted
Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh	Monday, May 27 through Tuesday, May 28, 2024	Work-Restricted
Martyrdom of the Báb	Tuesday, July 9, 2024	Work-Restricted
Birth of the Báb	Friday, November 1 through Saturday, November 2, 2024	Work-Restricted
Birth of Bahá'u'lláh	Saturday, November 2 through Sunday, November 3, 2024	Work-Restricted
BUDDHISM		
Lunar New Year	Saturday, February 10, 2024	Special Worship**
Sangkran Thai New Year	Saturday, April 13 through Monday, April 15, 2024	Special Worship
Pi Mai	Saturday, April 13 through Tuesday, April 16, 2024	Special Worship
Maha Sangkran Khmer New Year	Sunday, April 14 through Tuesday, April 16, 2024	Special Worship
Vesak	Thursday, May 23, 2024	Work-Restricted
Pchum Ben/Ancestors Day	Tuesday, October 1 through Thursday, October 3, 2024	Special Worship
Cambodian Water Festival Ceremony (Bon Om Touk)	Thursday, November 14 through Saturday, November 16, 2024	Special Worship
Loy Krathong	Saturday, November 16, 2024	Special Worship
Bodhi Day	Sunday, December 8, 2024	Special Worship
CHRISTIANITY		
Epiphany/ Three Kings Day	Saturday, January 6, 2024	Special Worship
Ash Wednesday	Wednesday, February 14, 2024	Special Worship
Good Friday	Friday, March 29, 2024	Special Worship
Easter	Sunday, March 31, 2024	Special Worship (Federal Holiday)
Orthodox Easter	Sunday, May 5, 2024	Special Worship
Christmas	Wednesday, December 25, 2024	Special Worship (Federal Holiday)

YMCA OF THE USA

101 N Wacker Drive, Chicago IL 60606

P 800 872 9622 F 312 977 9063 ymca.net

HINDUISM		
Maha Shivarati	Friday, March 8, 2024	Work-Restricted
Rama Navami	Wednesday, April 17, 2024	Work-Restricted
Holi	Sunday, March 24 through Monday, March 25, 2024	Special Worship
Krishna Janmashtami	Monday, August 26 through Tuesday, August 27, 2024	Work-Restricted
Diwali	Thursday, October 31, 2024	Work-Restricted
ISLAM (Islamic holidays begin at sundown the previous day.)		
Ramadan	Sunday, March 10 through Tuesday, April 9, 2024	Work-Restricted
Eid al-Fitr	Tuesday, April 9 through Wednesday, April 10, 2024	Work-Restricted
Eid al-Adha	Sunday, June 16 through Monday, June 17, 2024	Work-Restricted
Ashura	Tuesday, July 16 through Wednesday, July 17, 2024	Special Worship
Mawlid-al-Nabi	Sunday, September 15 through Monday, September 16, 2024	Work-Restricted
JUDAISM (Jewish holidays begin at sundown.)		
Purim	Saturday, March 23 through Sunday, March 24, 2024	Special Worship
Passover	Monday, April 22 through Monday, April 29, 2024	Work-Restricted
Shavuot	Tuesday, June 11 through Thursday June 13, 2024	Work-Restricted
Rosh Hashanah	Wednesday, October 2 through Friday, October 4, 2024	Work-Restricted
Yom Kippur	Friday, October 11 through Saturday, October 12, 2024	Work-Restricted
Sukkot	Wednesday, October 16 through Wednesday, October 23, 2024	Work-Restricted
Simchat Torah	Thursday, October 24 through Friday, October 25, 2024	Work-Restricted
Hanukkah	Wednesday, December 25, 2024 through Thursday, January 2, 2025	Special Worship
SIKHISM		
Birthday of Guru Gobind Singh Sahib	Wednesday, January 17, 2024	Special Worship
Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev Sahib	Monday, June 10, 2024	Work-Restricted
Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib	Sunday, November 24, 2024	Work-Restricted
Birthday of Guru Nanak Dev Sahib	Friday, November 15, 2024	Work-Restricted

Please note some of these religion's dates are based on different calendars than the US calendar – these are the best estimation of when they will be celebrated in the US but best to consult with local community members to confirm.

Work-Restricted: A religious observance that restricts or limits work and/or physical or mental activity directed toward the production or accomplishment of something; toil; labor.

Special Worship: Such religious observances listed above are NOT strictly work-restricted but may involve a special worship or observance.

BA'HAI

Naw-Ruz: New Year's Day

Ridván: 12-day festival, work is prohibited on 1st, 9th, and 12th days. Celebrates time that Bahá'u'lláh spent in the Garden of Ridván and proclamation of mission.

Declaration of the Báb: celebrates the beginning of the Bahá'í faith.

Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh: commemorates the death of Bahá'u'lláh.

Martyrdom of the Báb: commemorates the death of the Báb.

Birth of the Báb: celebrates the birth of the Báb.

Birth of Bahá'u'lláh: celebrates the birth of Bahá'u'lláh.

BUDDHISM

Bodhi Day: Also called Rohatsu or Bodhi Day. The day many Buddhist traditions celebrate the enlightenment of the Buddha.

Vesak: Traditionally known as Visakha Puja, is an extremely important day in the Buddhist tradition. This commemorates the birth, enlightenment, and death of the Buddha.ⁱⁱⁱ

Buddha's Birthday: The birthday of the Buddha.

Songkran Thai New Year: The traditional Thai New Year of Songkran, the biggest and most important of Thailand's annual festivals, has been celebrated for centuries and is full of tradition and culture. The word Songkran is derived from ancient Sanskrit, a language dating back thousands of years, and means to 'step into', 'enter' or 'pass into'. It describes the monthly movement or 'astrological passage' within the zodiac from one sphere to the next; in April the sun leaves the sphere of Aries and enters that of Taurus, a period known as Maha Songkran or the Great Songkran. This signifies the start of the Thai New Year.^{iv}

Pchum Ben/Ancestors Day: combining the Khmer word "Pchum", which means "to gather together", and "Ben", a "ball of food", is a Cambodian 15-day religious festival, culminating in celebrations on the 15th day of the tenth month in the Khmer calendar, paying respects to deceased relatives of up to 7 generations.

Maha Songkran Khmer New Year: Traditional and ritual celebration of the solar new year in Cambodia, ending of the harvesting season, and receiving the mythical blessing of the king of the gods, Kabil Maha Prum, through his seven daughters from Mount Sumeru, following the 12-animal zodiac.

Cambodian Water Festival (Bon Om Touk): Three day festival on the full harvest moon, ending the monsoon season, marking a reversal of the flow between the Mekong and Tonle Sap rivers, and commemorating and honoring a naval victory by Khmer King Jayavarman VII in the 12th century.

Loy Krathong: Loy Krathong is a festival celebrated by the Thai people on the full moon night of the twelfth month of the Thai Lunar calendar. In the modern calendrical system, this event usually occurs in the month of November, though the date varies from year to year. Regardless of the exact timing, Loy Kathrong is always considered as an occasion for joy, gratitude, and new beginnings.^v

CHRISTIANITY

Ash Wednesday: This day marks the beginning of Lent, a six-week period of prayer and fasting in anticipation of Easter.

Good Friday: The day Jesus was crucified.

Easter Sunday: The celebration of Jesus being raised from the dead.

Christmas: The day Jesus was born.

Epiphany/ Three Kings Day: Orthodox Christians - the day Jesus was born.

HINDUISM

Maha Shivaratri: Hindu celebration of the birth of Lord Shiva.

Ramanavani: A festival celebrating the birth of the most supreme God in Hinduism, Lord Rama.

Holi: Festival of Spring or Festival of Colors. This day is typically celebrated by families in India, Nepal, and other parts of Asia by partaking in various regional traditions.

Krishna Janmashtami: A two-day festival celebrating the birth of Lord Krishna.

Diwali: Festival of Lights. This holiday is typically celebrated by families sharing various traditional rituals in their homes. Although a 5 day festival, the 3rd day of the festival is the actual day of Diwali, commonly known as the Hindu New Year.

ISLAM

Eid al-Fitr: Marks the end of Ramadan, the month of fasting, and the holiest month in Islamic tradition. It literally means "breaking the fast."

Eid al-Adha: Festival of Sacrifice. Commemorates the willingness of Abraham to sacrifice his son Ishmael. God provided a sheep to sacrifice in Ishmael's place.

Ashura: Shi'a Muslims commemorate the martyrdom of Husayn ibn Ali, Muhammad's grandson. According to Sunni Muslims, Muhammad fasted and asked others to do so on this day as well.

Ramadan: The ninth month of the Islamic lunar year and is the time in which Muslims observe fast from sunrise to sunset.

JUDAISM

Rosh Hashanah: Jewish New Year. It is the beginning of a ten-day period of introspection and reflection.

Yom Kippur: Day of Atonement. It is the holiest day of the Jewish calendar marked with fasting, worship, and repentance.

Sukkot: Festival of Tabernacles. Commemorates the 40 years the Israelites wandered in the desert as well as the fall harvest. While the festival of Sukkot lasts for 7 days, the first day is considered a day of rest.

Passover: Festival of Passover. It commemorates the Exodus of Jews from slavery in Egypt. While Passover lasts for 8 days, the first two nights are the most significant and the first day is considered a day of rest.

Purim: Purim is a joyous holiday that celebrates the saving of the Jews from a threatened massacre in ancient Persia.

Shavuot: Shavuot marks the spring harvest and giving of the Torah. It is celebrated by eating dairy products and learning.

Simchat Torah: Simchat Torah is a joyous holiday that celebrates completing the yearly cycle of Torah readings.

Hanukkah: Also known as the festival of lights, it is an eight-day festival commemorating the recovery of Jerusalem and the Second Temple during the Maccabean Revolt in the 2nd century BCE.

SIKHISM

Birthday of Guru Gobind Singh Sahib: The tenth and last living prophet of the Sikhs, he passed the guruship onto the Sikh scripture, the Guru Granth Sahib, and the Sikh community, Guru Panth.

Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev Sahib: The 5th Guru and first martyr of the Sikhs. He compiled the religious text of Sikhism, the Guru Granth Sahib.

Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib: The 9th Guru of the Sikhs, who was killed by Mughal rulers in 1675 for defending Hindus facing forcible conversion to Islam.

Birthday of Guru Nanak Dev Sahib: Commemorates the birth of the founder of the Sikh faith.

ⁱ Calendar of Religious Holy Days and Observances. (n.d.). Retrieved from: <https://www.xavier.edu/jesuitresource/online-resources/calendar-religious-holidays-and-observances/index.php>

ⁱⁱ U.S. Membership Report. (2010). Retrieved from: http://www.thearda.com/rcms2010/r/u/rcms2010_99_us_adh_2010.asp

ⁱⁱⁱ Dhammadharo, A. L. & Bhikkhu, T. (1998). Visakha Puja. Retrieved from: <https://www.accesstoinsight.org/lib/thai/lee/visakha.html>

^{iv} TAT Newsroom (2021) Retrieved from: <https://www.tatnews.org/2021/03/thailands-songkran-festival-its-origins-history-and-modern-day-observance/>

^v Mongkolrat, Tayud (2014) Retrieved from: https://www.thailandfoundation.or.th/culture_heritage/loy-krathong-festival-all-you-need-to-know/