



INTERNATIONAL HOLIDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS

FEBRUARY 2010

2.1—Confederal Agreement Day; Senegal

Marks the date in 1982 when the confederation between Senegal and its neighbor Gambia came into existence following an agreement between the two countries signed on December 12, 1981. The federation was intended to promote cooperation between the two countries

2.1—Federal Territory Day; Malaysia

Commemorates the date in 1974 when Kuala Lumpur was ceded by the state of Selangor to the federal government of Malaysia. It also marks the date in 1984 when Labuan joined Malaysia and the date in 2001 when Putrajaya became the third federal territory

2.1—San Cecilio; Spain

The feast day of San Cecilio, Granada's patron saint

2.1—St. Brigid's Day; Montserrat

The feast day of St. Brigid, an Irish Roman Catholic nun and patroness of dairy maids, infants, midwives, blacksmiths, poets, nuns, and students. The day is customarily celebrated with crosses woven from rushes which are blessed then hung on the front doors and left in place all year. They are burned and replaced with a newly-woven cross on the next St. Brigid's Day

2.2—Candlemas; Christian

Celebrate the presentation of the baby Jesus, the Christians' Savior, in the Temple of Jerusalem 40 days after his birth

2.2—Imbolc; Pagan

A celebration of light and the coming of spring; one of the "Greater Sabbats" during the Wiccan year

2.3—Suyapa Day; Honduras

Honors the Virgin of Suyapa, patron saint of Honduras

2.3—Foundation of the Vietnamese Communist Party; Vietnam

Commemorates the founding of the party by Ho Chi Minh and other exiles at a conference in Hong Kong in 1930

2.3—Heroes' Day; Mozambique

Marks the anniversary of the assassination of Eduardo Mondlane, President of the Mozambican Liberation Front from 1962 until his death in 1969

2.3—Liberty Heroes Day; Sao Tome & Principe

2.3—San Blaise; Paraguay

The feast day of St. Blaise, physician, bishop, and patron saint of Paraguay

2.3—Setsubun; Japan

A festival held the day before the start of spring according to the Japanese lunar calendar. Rituals are performed with the purpose of chasing away evil spirits including the ritual of throwing roasted beans around one's house and at temples and shrines

2.4—National Day; Sri Lanka

Observes independence from Great Britain in 1948

2.4—Commencement of the Armed Struggle; Angola

Marks the date of the start of the armed struggle against Portuguese colonial rule

2.5—Constitution Day; Mexico

Marks the adoption of a national constitution in 1917

2.5—Chama Cha Mapinduzi Day; Tanzania

Honors the ruling political party of Tanzania which was established in 1977

2.5—Liberation of the Republic from the Alberoni Occupation; San Marino

Commemorates the liberation of the Republic of San Marino from Cardinal Giuio Alberoni's occupation in 1740

2.5—President's Day; Congo

2.5—St. Agatha's Day; San Marino

The feast day honoring the "co-patron" of the city

2.5—Unity Day; Burundi

2.6—Waitangi Day; New Zealand

Commemorates the signing of the Treaty at Waitangi in 1840 between the English settlers and the native Maori chiefs

2.6—Bob Marley Day; Jamaica

Marks the birthday of Robert Nesta Marley, a native of Nine Miles, Jamaica and perhaps the greatest legend of Reggae music

2.6—Sami National Day; Finland, Norway & Sweden

Commemorates the date in 1917 when the first Sami congress was held in Trondheim, Norway. This congress was the first time that Norwegian and Swedish Sami came together across their national border to work together to find solutions for common problems

2.7—Independence Day; Grenada

On this date in 1974, Grenada declared its independence from the British and adopted a modified Westminster parliamentary system based on the British model

2.8—Culture Day (Preseren's Day); Slovenia

Marks the date Slovenia's most celebrated poet, France Preseren, died in 1849

2.9—Feast of St. Maron; Lebanon

Honors the saint considered to be the father of the Maronite Catholic Church

2.10—St. Paul's Shipwreck (Feast of); Malta

On his return from the Holy Land in AD60, Saint Paul was shipwrecked on the island of Malta. Saint Paul is considered the Patron Saint of Malta and the anniversary of the shipwreck is celebrated as a public holiday

2.11—Kenkoku Kinen-no-Hi (National Foundation Day); Japan

Commemorates the accession to the throne of the Emperor Jimmu Tenno in 660 B.C

2.11—Armed Forces Day; Liberia

2.11—Youth Day; Cameroon

2.11—Anniversary of Lateranensi Pacts; Vatican City State
Marks the date in 1929 when the Vatican was set up as an independent state

2.12—Union of Myanmar (Pyidaungsa Day); Myanmar/Burma
Commemorates the conference in 1947 leading to the formation of the Union of Burma

2.12—Youth Day; Venezuela

A holiday dedicated to the youths of the country. The holiday was created to commemorate all the teenagers above 12 years old who fought and died in the Battle of La Victoria, during the Venezuelan War of Independence in 1814

2.12—Oruro Local Festival; Bolivia

Declared one of Mankind's Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO in 2001, the city of Oruro hosts a distinctly Andean version of Carnival every February

2.12—Maha Shivaratri (Shiva's Night); Hindu

Honors the Lord Shiva, who, legend says, on this night danced the Tandav, believed to be a dance of creation, preservation, and destruction

2.14—St. Valentine's Day; International

Recognized the possible execution date around 270 CE of one of two Christian martyrs named Valentine. Legend says that one secretly performed marriages between young people in opposition to the Roman Emperor's ban on marriage; another had the power to patch up lovers' quarrels. Since the Middle Ages, this day has been dedicated to romantic love

2.14—Trifon Zarezan (Wine-grower's Day); Bulgaria

A celebration for Saint Trifon, the patron saint of wine

2.14—Losar; Tibet

Celebrates leaving the old yearly cycle and passing into a new one. In ancient times, the three-day celebration began when peach trees blossomed

2.14—Lunar New Year; International

Observed by many Asian countries and communities around the world during the first three days of the first lunar month. In North and South Korea, the holiday is known as Shul and marks the first day of spring. In Vietnam, it is known as Tet. This holiday is also known as the Chinese New Year

2.15—National Day; Serbia

2.15—National Flag of Canada Day; Canada

Marks the day in 1965 when the Canadian flag was raised over Parliament Hill in Ottawa and hundreds of communities across Canada

2.15—National Lamb Day; New Zealand

New Zealand has a very large lamb population and this date marks the anniversary of the first shipment of frozen meat from New Zealand to London

2.15—Family Day (Saskatchewan only); Canada

Celebrates the importance of families and family life to people and their communities. Observed on the third Monday of February

2.16—Independence Day; Lithuania

Commemorates the 1918 declaration of independence from Russia. In 1990, the country again declared independence from the Soviet Union

2.16—Kim Jong-Il's Birthday; North Korea

Commemorates the birthday of North Korea's leader, born in 1941

2.18—Independence Day; Gambia

Celebrates the anniversary of independence from Britain in 1965. A public vote in 1970 made the country a republic within the Commonwealth

2.19—Rashtriya Prajatantra Divas (National Democracy Day); Nepal

Celebrates the 1951 overthrow of the Rana family, which had ruled since the mid-nineteenth century. Also a celebration of the 1952 adoption of a constitution

2.19—National Flag Day; Turkmenistan

2.21—Shaheed (Martyr) Day; Bangladesh

Honors martyrs who died in 1952 when disputes broke out over the proclamation of Urdu as the official state language

2.21—Birthday of King Harald V; Norway

Honors the birthday of King Harald V who became King in 1991 and is the first Norwegian-born prince in 567 years

2.22—Abu Simbel Festival; Egypt

Celebrates the two occasions in the year (the other is October 22) when the light of the rising sun reaches the 180-foot-deep innermost chambers of Abu Simbel, the great temple of Ramses II

2.22—Independence Day; St. Lucia

Commemorates the date in 1979 when St. Lucia achieved full independence from the United Kingdom

2.22—Unity Day; Syria

Celebrates cooperation among Arab nations

2.23—Republic Day; Guyana

Commemorates the establishment of the republic in 1970

2.23—Army Day; Tajikistan

Marks the date in 1918 during the Russian Civil War when the first mass draft into the Red Army occurred in Petrograd and Moscow

2.23—National Day; Brunei Darussalam

2.23—Defender of the Fatherland Day; Russia, Ukraine

Marks the date in 1918 during the Russian Civil War when the first mass draft into the Red Army occurred in Petrograd and Moscow. The holiday celebrates the soldiers of the Russian military as well as Russian men as a whole

2.24—Baire Proclamation; Cuba

Commemorates the day in 1895 when the Cuban Independence Movement issued a proclamation of independence from Spanish occupation

2.24—Dia de la Bandera (Flag Day); Mexico

Marks the date in 1821 when all factions fighting in the War of Independence joined together to form the Army of the Three Guarantees. This was in response to the Plan de Iguala, which was signed by Vicente Guerrero and Agustin de Iturbide and officially declared Mexico an independent country

2.24—Independence Day (1918); Estonia

Celebrates independence from the Bolshevik Russia in 1918

2.24—Liberation Day; Ghana

Commemorates the ousting of the Nkrumah government by Ghana's armed forces on this day in 1966

2.24—Dragobete; Romania

Known as "the day when birds get engaged" this holiday is considered the first day of spring

2.25—National Day; Kuwait

Commemorates the 1978 accession of King Shaykh Sir 'abdullah Al-Salim al-Sabah

2.25—Fiesta sa EDSA (People Power Day); Philippines

Commemorates the bloodless revolution in 1986 in which President Ferdinand Marcos was toppled from power

2.25—Norriture Rituelle des sources tet d' l'eau; Haiti

Ritual feedings of the springs

2.25—Revolution Day; Suriname

2.25—Ta'anit Ester; Jewish

Also called the fast of Esther, this is a Jewish fast from dawn until dusk on Purim eve. It commemorates the three day fast observed by the Jewish people prior to their deliverance from Haman's plot to annihilate them as recorded in the Book of Esther

2.26—Intercalary Days; Baha'i

Also known as Ayyam-i-Ha or Days of Ha. A time of rejoicing, generosity, and welcoming neighbors in preparation for the period of fasting from March 2 to 20

2.26—Liberation Day; Kuwait

Marks the end of the Iraqi occupation which began in August 1990 and ended on this date in 1991 when the invading Iraqi army was routed by the Operation Desert Storm troops

2.26—Prophet Mohammed's Birthday (Mawlid al-Nabi); Islamic

Commemorates the prophet Muhammad's birthday ca. 570. Begins at sundown the previous day

2.27—Independence Day; Dominican Republic

Marks the date in 1844 when the Dominican Republic gained its independence from Spain

2.28—Memorial Day; Taiwan

Commemorates the thousands of native Taiwanese killed on this date in 1947 by the then-ruling Chinese government

2.28—Andalusia Day; Spain

A day to honor Andalusia, an autonomous community of Spain

2.28—Lantern Festival; China, Taiwan

Marks the end of Chinese New Year celebrations and the appearance of the first full moon of the New Year

2.28—Independence Day; Egypt

Commemorates independence from British rule established on this day in 1922

2.28—Purim; Jewish

A Jewish holiday that commemorates the deliverance of the Jews from the plot of Hama to exterminate them as recorded in the Book of Esther

2.28—Death of Tsongkapa (Butter Lamp Festival); Tibet

Marks the anniversary of the death of Tsongkapa, the great reformer of Tibetan Buddhism & founder of the Gelukpa sect. In honor of his death houses, streets, and temples are lit by numerous lamps