

INTERNATIONAL HOLIDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS



MAY 2011

- 5.1 Yom HaShoah** (Holocaust Remembrance Day) Israel
- Labor Day/Workers' Day** International
- May Day** - marks the end of the uncomfortable winter half of the year in the Northern hemisphere, and it has traditionally been an occasion for popular and often raucous celebrations International
- Motinos diena** (Mother's Day) Lithuania
- Kazakhstan People's Unity Day** - originally known as International Day of the Workers' Solidarity, this holiday was re-named People's Unity by Kazakh Presidential Decree in 1995 Kazakhstan
- Flores de Mayo** (Month of May) - a festival of tribute to the Christian Blessed Virgin Mary that lasts the entire month Philippines
- Constitution Day** - anniversary of the proclamation of the republic Marshall Islands
- Puerto Limon Fiestas** – marked by family picnics, cricket matches, dances and games Costa Rica
- Red Hill Holiday** – a celebration of spring; held the first Sunday after Easter Russia*
- Divine Mercy Sunday** – a celebration of the Divine Mercy of Jesus Christ, as revealed by Christ Himself to Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska; this day was first extended to the entire Catholic Church in 2000 Christian*

5.2	Ascension Day - commemorates Jesus Christ's ascension into heaven	Madagascar*
	Dos de Mayo - marks the day in 1808 when the people of Madrid rebelled against the occupation of the city by French troops, provoking a brutal repression by the French Imperial forces and triggering the Peninsular War	Spain
	Flag Day – the national flag was adopted in 1919; a day was set aside to honor it in 2004	Poland
	May Bank Holiday - one of several Mondays during the warm weather months when banks and other businesses throughout Europe are closed to provide workers with a three-day weekend	Ireland, Republic of UK

5.3	Kenpo Kinenbi (Constitution Day) - a day to celebrate the constitution of Japan	Japan
	Swieto Trzeciego Maja (Constitution Day) – anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution of may 3 rd Polish-Lithuanian commonwealth	Poland, Lithuania
	Fiesta de las Cruces/La Cruz de Mayo - a festival which includes a procession of decorative crosses to neighboring churches	Peru, Venezuela
	La Cruz de Mayo (The Cross of May) - originally a celebration of spring, fertility, and nature rites, with the advent of Christianity this holiday became a time of homage to the cross	Venezuela

5.4	National Youth Day - commemorates the beginning of the May Fourth Movement in 1919	China
	Cassinga Day - marks the day in 1978 when hundreds of unarmed Namibian refugees were massacred by South African troops	Namibia
	Independence Day - declared an independent republic on this day in 1990	Latvia
	Crown Prince's Birthday - honors King George Tupou V, current king of Tonga, born on this day in 1948	Tonga
	Remembrance Day for Martyrs & Disabled - commemorates those killed or wounded in the Soviet/Afghani War	Afghanistan

5.4	Dodenherdenking (Remembrance of the Dead) - commemorates all the members of the armed forces and civilians of the Kingdom of the Netherlands who died in war situations or peacekeeping missions since the outbreak of World War II	Netherlands
	Midori no hi (Day of Nature)	Japan
	Kokumin no kyujitsu (Citizen's Day of Rest)	Japan

5.5	Kodomo no hi (Children's Day) - a national holiday that was once known as Boys' Day but since 1948 has been a day to honor both boys and girls. Some still practice the old custom of flying wind socks in the shape of carp (a symbol of strength, courage, and determination shown in its upstream journey)	Japan, South Korea
	Dutch Liberation Day - celebrates the day on which Nazi forces were driven out of Holland by the Allies in 1945	Netherlands
	Cinco de Mayo - celebrates the victory over French invaders at the Battle of Puebla on May 5, 1862. In the U.S., it has become a day for citizens of Mexican heritage to celebrate their ancestry	Mexico
	Constitution Day - commemorates the establishment of the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic	Kyrgyzstan
	Coronation Day - commemorates the coronation of King Bhumibol Adulyadej in 1950	Thailand
	Indian Heritage Day - marks the date on which the first East Indian immigrant arrived in Guyana	Guyana
	Kvetnove povstani ceskeho lidu (Prague Uprising in 1945) - commemorates the attempt by the Czech resistance to liberate the city of Prague from German occupation on this day in 1945	Czech Republic
	Senior Citizens Day	Palau
	Eorininal – Children's day of fun at the cinema, parks, zoos, family restaurants	Korea
	Patriots' Victory Day - Commemorates the 1941 liberation of Addis Ababa by British and Ethiopian forces	Ethiopia

5.6	Samuel K. Doe Day - marks the birth of Samuel Kanyon Doe in 1951; he was president of Liberia from 1980 to 1990	Liberia
	Hidrellez Festival - a celebration of the first day of spring and the awakening of nature	Turkey
	Army Day - commemorated on the feast day of St. George, the patron saint of the Bulgarian Army	Bulgaria
	Martyrs' Day - marks the Turkish occupation hanging of Syrian and Lebanese patriots in Beirut and Damascus on this day in 1916	Lebanon, Syria, Gabon
	Parshuram Jayanti	Hindu, Jain*
	St. George's Day - the feast day of St. George which is marked by morning picnics, music, and folk dances, as well as eating a whole lamb, as St. George is the patron saint of shepherds	Bosnia- Herzegovina, Bulgaria
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5.7	Akshaya-tritiya - the day is believed to bring good luck and success. It is believed that if you do a charity on this day you will be blessed and will receive blessings many fold	Jainism
	Hari Hol Pahang - a day for citizens to remember the past and pay tribute or gratitude to the past Sultans and royalties of the state. Special ceremonies are carried out by palace officials and royalties at the graves or mausoleums of the past Sultans	Malaysia
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5.8	Mother's Day	Slovakia*
	Full Moon of Kasone - commemorates the days of Buddha's birth, the attainment of His Enlightenment and His Demise	Myanmar, Burma*
	Gospel Day	Tuvalu*
	V-E Day (Victory in Europe Day) - marks the 1945 unconditional surrender of Germany to Allied forces	International
	Red Cross Day - a day to remember the efforts that all National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies do worldwide to advocate for the relief of human suffering	International
	Heroes' Day	Turkmenistan
	White Nights Festival Begins - annual international arts festival during the season of the midnight sun	Russia

Parents' Day - usually celebrated by giving a carnation with presents to parents and/or singing the Parents' Day song

South Korea

5.9 Yom HaZikaron (Israel Memorial Day) - a time to remember all those who lost their lives in struggle for Israeli independence as well as the soldiers who have died while serving in Israel's armed forces; victims of terrorist acts are also remembered

Israel*

Victory & Peace Day - commemorates the 1945 surrender of German forces in Eastern Europe and honors all those who died in World War II

Turkmenistan,
Ukraine,
Armenia,
Serbia,
Belarus,
Kazakhstan,
Krygyzstan

Mother's Day

Belarus,
Australia,
Latvia

Day of Memory and Respect - in honor of the patriots who fought for the protection of the native territory, its freedom, independence and peace

Uzbekistan

Day of Victory over Facism - marks the capitulation of Nazi Germany to the Soviet Union in World War II

Eastern &
Central
European
Countries

5.10 Constitution Day - marks the proclamation of the Federated State of Micronesia on this day in 1979

Micronesia

Dia de la Madre (Mother's Day) - a day to honor all mothers throughout the country

Mexico

Seokga Tansinil (Buddha's Birthday) - begins a week-long festival that usually ends on the same day as Vesak Puja in other parts of Asia

South Korea*

Yom HaAtzmaut (Israel's Independence Day) - devoted to the memory of those who have given their lives so the State of Israel can exist today

Israel*

5.11 Royal Ploughing Ceremony - an ancient royal rite to make the traditional beginning of the rice growing season Thailand*

5.12 Nurse's Day - a day to acknowledge the important role nurses play in Australia's health system Australia

Mangers pour divers loas - feeding of the different loa; loa are the many lesser spirits that believers worship Vodou*

Galungan Day - the most important holiday symbolizing the victory of Virtue (Dharma) upon Evil (Adharma); specialized by the fitting of 'penjor', a tall bamboo pole splendidly decorated with woven young coconut leaves, fruit, cakes and flowers, on the right side of every house entrance; people are attired in their finest clothes and jewels this day Bali*

Yom Yerushalayim (Jerusalem Day) - commemorates the reunification of Jerusalem and the establishment of Israeli control over the Old City in June 1967 Israel

5.13 King Sihamoni's Birthday - in honor of King Sihamoni who was born May 14, 1953 Cambodia

5.14 National Unification Day - under the leadership of President Tubman, who led from 1944 to 1971, the animosity between the Americo-Liberian elite and the indigenous majority was halted Liberia

5.15 Independence Day - marks independence from Spain in 1811 Paraguay

International Day of Families - a day to highlight the importance of family International

San Isidro Feast Day - to honor the patron saint of peasants, day laborers, and farmers Spain, Chile, Peru, Costa Rica

<p>5.15 Nabas Bariw Festival - to commemorate the feast day of St. Isidore, the patron saint of Nabas; the celebration showcases the town's hat, mat and bariw products as well as the town's unique tourism sites and natural attractions</p>	Philippines
<p>Teachers' Day - originally started by a group of Red Cross youth team members who visited their sick ex-teachers at hospitals; teachers are usually presented with carnations by their students; ex-students pay their respects to their former teachers by visiting them and handing them a carnation</p>	South Korea
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<p>5.17 Buddha Jayanti/Visakha Bucha/Birth of Buddha - commemorates the birth, enlightenment, and passing into Nirvana of the historical Buddha</p>	Hindu*
<p>National Liberation Day – following an eight-month military campaign that had seen it recapture the whole of Zaire with the aid of Rwanda, Uganda, Burundi and Angola, the AFDL spokesman, Laurent-Désiré Kabila, seized power in Kinshasa and proclaimed himself President of the Republic</p>	Zaire
<p>Syttende Mai (Constitution Day) - marks independence from Denmark and the day in 1814 on which the constitution was signed</p>	Norway
<p>Constitution Day - anniversary of the constitution in 1968</p>	Nauru
<p>Birthday of the Raja of Perlis</p>	Malaysia
<p>San Juan Day – the main activity is a 22.5-kilometer marathon</p>	Costa Rica
<p>Dia das Letras Galegas (Galician Literature Day) - the first holiday took place in 1963 to commemorate the date in 1863 when Cantares gallegos, the first work written in the Galician language by Rosalia de Castro, who later became one of the most important poets in the history of Galicia, was published. Since 1963, each holiday has been dedicated to a different writer in the Galician language</p>	Spain
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<p>5.18 Flag & University Day</p>	Haiti
<p>Manger pour Gran'n Aloumandia (Feeding of Grande Aloumandia)</p>	Haiti*

5.18 Constitution Day/Revival & Unity Day - Turkmenistan
commemorates the day in 1992 when the Constitution of Turkmenistan was accepted as well as a day to honor the classic of Turkmen literature, poet and philosopher Magtymguly Pyragy

Battle of Las Piedras - commemorates the end of the Battle of Las Piedras in 1828. During this battle Uruguay defeated Brazil in the final conflict during their struggle for independence

5.19 Commemoration of Ataturk & Youth and Sports Day - Turkey
commemorates the landing at Samsun in 1919 of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk and the beginning of a national movement for independence. On this day, young athletes carry torches to the sites of athletic contests

Ho Chi Minh's Birthday - Vietnam
commemorates the birth of Ho Chi Minh in 1890. Ho Chi Minh was a Communist, Marxist-Leninist Vietnamese revolutionary and statesman, who later became prime minister then president of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam

Ascension Haiti*

5.20 Sim'bi blanc Haiti*

Independence Day - Cuba, East Timor
Portugal granted independence to East Timor in 1975, but it was soon after invaded by Indonesia, which only recognized East Timorese independence in 2002

National Day - Cameroon
commemorates the establishment of the Republic of Cameroon on this day in 1972

Great Prayer Day - Denmark
a collection of minor Christian holy days consolidated into one day. Observed the 4th Friday after Easter

Party Day (Popular Movement Day) - Zaire
anniversary of the Mouvement Populaire de la Revolution (MPR), the political party of Mobutu. Until 1990 it was the only legal political party

5.21	Sheep Festival - celebrates the descent of the sheep herds from the mountains	Cameroon
	Independence Day - marks independence from State union with Serbia in 2006	Montenegro
	Naval Glories Day (Battle of Iquique)- commemorates the confrontation on this day in 1879 during the naval stage of the War of the Pacific, a conflict between Chile and the alliance between Peru and Bolivia	Chile
	Armed Forces Day – a day set aside to thank the military members for their patriotic service in support of the U.S.	U.S.
	World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development - the day provides an opportunity to deepen understanding of the values of cultural diversity and to learn to “live together” better	International

5.22	Kuningan Day – takes place 10 days after Galungan, bringing the holiday period to a close; a special ritual ceremony is held for the Ancestral spirits	Bali*
	Lag B'Omer – refers to the 33 rd day of the counting of the omer (sheaf of barley or wheat); celebrated with bonfires and children playing with bows; some eat carob on this day	Jewish*
	National Unity Day - commemorates the reunification of Yemen in 1990	Yemen
	National Sovereignty Day - dedicated to the head of state and to the nation’s culture	Haiti
	International Day for Biological Diversity - proclaimed by the United Nations as a day to increase understanding and awareness of biodiversity issues	International

5.23	Victoria Day - in honor of the birthdays of Queen Victoria and the reigning sovereign	Canada*
	Declaration of the Bab - commemorates when the Bab, the prophet-herald of the Baha’i faith, revealed in 1844, in Shiraz, Persia (now Iran), that he was the herald of a greater messenger of God. Begins at sundown the previous day	Baha’i

<p>5.23 Labor Day - commemorates the day in 1938 when Alexander Bustamante led a labor rebellion leading to Jamaican independence</p>	<p>Jamaica</p>
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<p>5.24 Bermuda Day - traditionally the first day local residents will go into the sea</p>	<p>Bermuda</p>
<p>Commonwealth Day - national holiday in honor of the Queen's birthday</p>	<p>Belize</p>
<p>St. Cyril & Methodius Day (Day of Culture & Literacy) - commemorates the creation of the Slavic Glagolitic and Cyrillic alphabets by the brothers Saints Cyril and Methodius as well as the introduction of literacy and the preaching of the gospels in the Slavonic language</p>	<p>Bulgaria, Macedonia</p>
<p>Battle of Pichincha - commemorates the Battle Pichincha which took place on this day in 1822 between a Patriot army under General Antonio Jose de Sucre against a Royalist army commanded by Field Marshall Melchor Aymerich; the defeat of the Royalist forces brought the liberation of Quito and secured the independence of the Spanish colonial administrative jurisdiction from which the Republic of Ecuador would emerge</p>	<p>Ecuador</p>
<p>Independence Day – marks independence from Ethiopian rule in 1993 after a 30-year civil war</p>	<p>Eritrea</p>
<p>Liberation Day - commemorates the day in 1991 when fighters of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front captured Asmara and completed the liberation of the entire country of Eritrea from the Ethiopian colonial occupation army</p>	<p>Eritrea</p>
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<p>5.25 Revolution Day - marks declared independence in 1810 from the Spanish viceroy of Lima, Peru</p>	<p>Argentina</p>
<p>African Freedom Day - anniversary of the 1963 formation of the Organization of African Unity by 30 African leaders. The day is marked by sports contests, political rallies, and tribal dances</p>	<p>International</p>
<p>Heroes' Day</p>	<p>Lesotho</p>
<p>Bonn Chroat Preah Nongkoal (Royal Ploughing Ceremony) – rice planting ceremony usually done by the royal family</p>	<p>Cambodia</p>

5.25	Independence Day - commemorates the 1946 treaty that established the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and independence from Great Britain	Jordan
	Resistance and Liberation Day - anniversary of Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon in 2000	Lebanon
	Anniversary of the Organization of African Unity	Comoros
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5.26	Independence Day - marks independence from British rule in 1966	Guyana
	Independence Day - marks the day of the First Republic in 1918	Georgia
	Dzien Matki (Mother's Day)	Poland
	Prince Frederik's Birthday - marks the birth of Frederik, heir apparent to the Throne of Denmark	Denmark
	Sorry Day - instituted to acknowledge the wrong that had been done to the indigenous families when Aboriginal children were removed from their families as well as a day in remembrance of the mistreatment of the Aboriginal people	Australia
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5.27	Abolition Day - commemorates the abolition of slavery in 1848	Guadeloupe
	Mother's Day - commemorates the battle of Coronilla which took place in what is now the city of Cochabamba on this day in 1812. In this battle, women fighting for the country's independence were slaughtered by the Spanish army	Bolivia
	Reconciliation Week Begins - a time to give people across Australia the opportunity to focus on reconciliation between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians	Australia
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5.28	Republic Day - commemorates the founding of the Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan in 1918	Azerbaijan*
	First Republic Day (Restoration of Armenia's Statehood) - anniversary of the Declaration of the first Armenian Republic in 1918	Armenia

<p>5.28 Overthrow of the Dergue Regime - marks the overthrow of the Dergue dictatorial regime on this day in 1991</p>	Ethiopia
<p>National Flag Day - commemorates the day in 1898 when the modern flag of the Philippines was first displayed in battle</p>	Philippines
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<p>5.29 Ascension of Baha'u'llah - marks the anniversary of the death of the faith's prophet-founder, Baha'u'llah, who died while in exile</p>	Baha'i
<p>Anniversary the Death of President Ali Soilih - marks the Death of Ali Soilih, Comorian socialist and President of the revolutionary council from January 1976 until May 1978</p>	Comoros
<p>Carpet Day –a large-scale exposition of handmade carpets; held the last Sunday of May</p>	Turkmenistan*
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<p>5.30 Memorial Day - commemorates U.S. soldiers who died while in the military service; observed the last Monday in May</p>	U.S., Puerto Rico*
<p>Indian Arrival Day - commemorates the arrival of the first Indian indentured laborers from India to Trinidad in 1845 on the ship Fatel Razack</p>	Trinidad, Tobago
<p>Mother's Day</p>	Nicaragua
<p>Sung Masses (chante-messes)</p>	Haiti*
<p>Kaamatan Harvest Festival - characterized by cultural performances, music, traditional dances, food, and drink, the Harvest Festival celebrates the bounty of the harvest</p>	Malaysia
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<p>5.31 Armed Forces Day - commemorates the formation of the Royal Brunei Armed Forces</p>	Brunei
<p>Dia de Castilla la Mancha</p>	Spain
<p>No Tobacco Day - an opportunity to educate people about tobacco, the largest preventable cause of death and disease in Australia</p>	Australia