



# INTERNATIONAL HOLIDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS

## AUGUST 2009

### **8.1—Confederation Day;** Switzerland

Decreed in 1891, but the origins of this holiday date to 1291, when the foundation of the Swiss Confederation was laid

### **8.1—Emancipation Day;** Trinidad & Tobago

Slavery was abolished throughout the British Empire in 1833. Those of African descent living in Trinidad and Tobago have observed this holiday since 1985, when it replaced Columbus Discovery Day

### **8.1—Lughnashadh** (or Lammas Day); International

A celebration of the harvest and one of the “Greater Sabbats” during the Wiccan year. In medieval England, loaves made from the first ripe grain were blessed in the church on this day – lammas means “loaf mass”

### **8.1—Armed Forces Day;** Angola

### **8.1—Independence Day;** Benin

Commemorates independence from France in 1960

### **8.1—Mini Fetes;** French Polynesia

Month long performances by dancers and singers

### **8.1—St. Dominic’s Day;** Nicaragua

A day to honor with processions and celebrations the patron saint of Managua, the capital of Nicaragua

### **8.2—Ilinden** (National Day); Macedonia

Commemorates the 1903 uprising against the Ottoman Empire and honors the prophet Elias

### **8.2—Virgin of the Angels Day;** Costa Rica

The feast day of the Virgin of the Angels. Many pilgrims come to Cartago to visit the Basilica de Nuestra Senora de Los Angeles. The church has a statue of the Black Madonna known as La Negrita, who supposedly has great healing powers. Many come to the statue in hope of a miracle from La Negrita

### **8.3—Independence Day;** Niger

Celebrates the attainment of independence from France on this day in 1960

### **8.3—Armed Forces Day;** Equatorial Guinea

### **8.3—Fiesta de la Colmena;** Spain

### **8.3—Motupe;** Peru

The most important religious celebration in the Lambayeque region, on this day the pilgrimage Santisima Cruz de Motupe is held in honor of the local patron saint

### **8.3—National Flag Day;** Venezuela

Originally celebrated on March 12, the day the original design was first flown in 1806 at Jacmel, flag day is now celebrated on August 3, the day the flag was first flown over Venezuelan soil at La Vela de Coro

**8.3—Pidjiguiti Martyr’s Day;** Guinea Bissau

Anniversary of the Pidjiguiti massacre in 1959, when police shot down some 50 striking dockworkers. This became the beginning of the active resistance against the Portuguese colonial power. A monument shaped like a gigantic black fist commemorates the massacre

**8.3—Labor Day;** Samoa

Celebrated the first Monday in August

**8.4—Independence Day;** Jamaica

Signifies independence from Great Britain in 1962

**8.4—Verslunarmannahelgi;** Iceland

Celebrates the constitution of 1874. Also known as Shop and Office Workers’ Holiday

**8.4—Anniversary of Huancavelica;** Peru

The commemoration of the Spanish founding of the city, celebrated with parties and fireworks

**8.4—Constitution Day;** Cook Islands

**8.4—Revolution Day;** Burkina Faso

On this day in 1984 the Republic of Upper Volta was renamed Burkina Faso

**8.5—Independence Day;** Burkina Faso

A celebration of full autonomy from France in 1960

**8.5—National Children’s Day;** Tuvalu

Children lead the village in celebrations and are treated to a traditional meal

**8.5—Santo Domingo Foundation Day;** Dominican Republic

Marks the anniversary of the founding of Santo Domingo, the Dominican Republic’s capital, on this day in 1498 by Bartholomew Columbus, Christopher Columbus’s brother

**8.6—Independence Day;** Bolivia

Signifies independence from Spain in 1825

**8.6—Accession of H.H. Sheikh Zayed;** United Arab Emirates

Commemorates the day in 1966 Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan became emir of Abu Dhabi. He served as president of United Arab Emirates from 1971 until 2004

**8.6—Independence Day;** Jamaica

Commemorates independence from the United Kingdom in 1962

**8.6—The Transfiguration;** Bulgaria

According to legend it was on this day Jesus transfigured himself in front of his disciples, strengthening their belief in his holy origin. On this day Bulgarians pick grapes, take them to the church to be sanctified, and then give them out for health and fertility

**8.7—Battle of Boyacá;** Colombia

Anniversary of the battle in 1819 in which Colombia acquired its definitive independence from the Spanish Monarchy

**8.7—Independence Day;** Ivory Coast

Commemorates full independence on this date in 1960

**8.7—Emancipation Day;** St. Kitts & Nevis

Commemorates the emancipation of slaves in the 1830s

**8.8—Queen’s Name Day;** Sweden

**8.8—Father’s Day;** Taiwan

Also called “Baba Day”

**8.8—Independence Day;** Bhutan

Commemorates independence from Honduras in 1904

**8.8—International Day of the World’s Indigenous People;** International

A U.N. resolution calling for international cooperation for the solution of problems faced by indigenous people in such areas as culture, education, health, human rights, the environment, and social and economic development

**8.8—Peace Day** (Ceasefire Day); Iraq

Anniversary of the end of the Iran-Iraq War

**8.8—Saint Mary Mackilop Day;** Australia

Feast day of Saint Mary Mackilop, patron saint of Australia, who, together with Father J.T. Woods, founded the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart

**8.9—National Day;** Singapore

Marks the day of independence from Malaysia in 1965

**8.9—Women’s Day;** South Africa

Commemorates the national march of women on this day in 1956 to petition against legislation that required African person to carry the “pass”, special identification documents which curtailed an African’s freedom of movement during the apartheid era

**8.10—Independence Day;** Ecuador

Signifies this date in 1960, which initiated a war for freedom within Latin America

**8.10—St. Lawrence Day;** Spain

**8.10—Quangtang Kyagqen Horse Racing Festivals;** Tibet

A celebration which includes horse races, archery, and horsemanship

**8.10—Youth Day;** Kiribati

Honors the important role youth play in the growth of society

**8.11—Independence Day;** Chad

Signifies this date in 1960, when full independence was achieved from France

**8.11—Heroe’s Day;** Zimbabwe

A day to honor fallen liberation leaders

**8.11—King Hussein Accession;** Jordan

Anniversary of the day in 1952 when Hussein bin Talal was named King of Jordan. He served as king until his death in 1999

**8.11—Montserrat Annual Pilgrimage;** Montserrat

**8.12—Arequipa Week;** Peru

Week long festivals that include dancing, folklore, arts and crafts

**8.12—Defense Forces Day;** Zimbabwe

**8.12—Queen’s Birthday;** Thailand

The birthday of Queen Sirikit, born on this day in 1932

**8.13—Independence Day;** Central African Republic

Commemorates independence proclaimed on this day in 1960

**8.13—International Lefthanders Day;** International

A day to increase awareness of the difficulties and frustration experienced by left-handers in everyday life

**8.13—Lao Issara** (Day of the Free Laos); Laos

Commemorates the formation of Lao Issara, an anti-French, non-communist nationalist movement formed in 1945 by Prince Phetsarath

**8.13—Women’s Day;** Tunisia

Anniversary of the Code of Personal Status, a series of progressive laws aiming at the institution of equality between men and women, which was promulgated on this day in 1956

**8.14—Independence Day; Pakistan**

Commemorates independence from Britain in 1947

**8.14—Honey Spas; Russia**

The first of three harvest festivals to be celebrated in the month of August, the last month of the summer season, when the harvest is sown. During the honey spa honey is collected, blessed, and eaten

**8.14—Oued Ed-Dahab Day; Morocco**

A day to celebrate the return to Morocco of the Oued Eddahab region which was formerly held by Mauritania

**8.15—O-Bon (Festival of Souls); Japan**

A Japanese Buddhist custom to honor the departed spirits of one's ancestors. The festival lasts for three days. It is celebrated at different times during the year. "Shichigatsu Bon" is based on the solar calendar and is celebrated around July 15<sup>th</sup> in areas such as Tokyo, Yokohama, and Tohoku. "Hachigatsu Bon" is based on the solar calendar and is celebrated around the 15<sup>th</sup> of August. "Kyu Bon" is celebrated on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the seventh month of the lunar calendar in areas like the northern part of the Kanto region

**8.15—Brazzaville (National Day); Congo**

A celebration of full autonomy from France in 1960

**8.15—Korea Liberation Day; North and South Korea**

In North Korea, marks the surrender of Japan in 1945. In South Korea, marks the creation of an independent government in 1948

**8.15—Independence Day; India**

Marks independence from Great Britain in 1947, when the Indian Independence Act went into effect

**8.15—Assumption of the Virgin Mary; International**

Commemorates the taking of the Virgin Mary's body and soul into heaven

**8.15—Acadian Day; Canada**

Celebrated on the day of the Assumption of Mary

**8.15—Constitution Day; Equatorial Guinea**

**8.15—Foundation of Old Panama; Panama**

Anniversary of the founding of Panama City on this date in 1519 by Pedro Arias de Avila

**8.16—Restoration of the Republic; Dominican Republic**

Celebrates the 1863 declaration of independence from Spain, after a brief lapse into colonial status. Independence was attained in 1865, following a bitter war

**8.16—Children's Day; Paraguay**

Commemorates the day of the infamous Battle of Acosta Nu, where 20,000 men of the Brazilian Army crushed a Paraguayan battle made up of 3,500 children ages six to fifteen

**8.16—Independence Day; Gabon**

Marks the anniversary of independence in 1960

**8.17—Proklamasi Kermerdekaan (Independence Day); Indonesia**

Celebrates independence from Dutch colonial rule in 1945. After more years of fighting, Indonesia was formally granted autonomy on December 27, 1949

**8.17—Death of General Jose de San Martin; Argentina**

Anniversary of the death of Jose Francisco de San Martin Matorras, an Argentine general and the prime leader of the southern part of South America's successful struggle for independence from Spain, on this day in 1850

**8.18—Shab-e-Barat; Islamic (Muslim)**

A fast in preparation for Ramadan. It is believed that on this night, Allah (God) absolves sins and fixes the destinies of humans for the coming year. It is common, particularly in India and Pakistan, to ask Allah to forgive people who have died. Begins at sundown the previous day

**8.19—Apple Spas; Russia**

The second of three harvest festivals to be celebrated in the month of August, the last month of the summer season when the harvest is sown. During Apple Spas fruits and vegetables are gathered and blessed

**8.19—Day of the Failed August, 1991 Coup;** Russia

Honors those that died during an attempt to end Gorbachev's grip on power. The coup marked the beginning of the end of communism in the former Soviet Union

**8.19—Independence Day;** Afghanistan

Commemorates the Treaty of Rawalpindi in 1919. The treaty granted independence from Britain

**8.19—Revolution of 1945** (August Revolution); Vietnam

The beginning of demonstrations and uprisings against French colonial rule by the Viet Minh led by Ho Chi Minh

**8.19—Birth of Crown Princess Mette Marit;** Norway

Celebrates in birth of Mette-Marit, Crown Princess of Norway, on this day in 1973

**8.20—Szent István napja, az államalapítás és az új kenyér ünnepe** (St. Stephen's Day, Celebration of the Foundation of the State and of the New Bread); Hungary

Commemorates Saint Stephen, the first Christian King of Hungary, who ruled between 997-1038, and was canonized on this day in 1038. It is also the day the first bread from the new harvest is baked

**8.20—Restoration of Independence Day;** Estonia

Celebrates Estonia's return to independence in 1991

**8.20—The King & People's Revolution;** Morocco

Anniversary of the day in 1953 when French colonial authorities exiled King Mohammed V and the Royal Family after the king refused to disavow the action of the national movement and to sign decrees consecrating French domination over Morocco. In response the Moroccan people joined the King in defending their homeland and their monarch

**8.22—National Flag Day;** Russia

Anniversary of the day in 1991 when the Russian legislature chose to fly Russia's tri-color flag rather than the hammer-and-sickle flag of the Soviet Union

**8.23—Black Ribbon Day;** Lithuania

Commemorates the day in 1939 when the Molotov-Ribentrop pact was signed which handed the Baltic republics over to the Soviet Union

**8.23—National Flag Day;** Ukraine

Celebrated the day before Independence Day

**8.23—International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade & Its Abolition;** International  
Designated by UNESCO to memorialize the transatlantic slave trade. The date is significant because, during the night of August 22 & 23, 1791 on the island of Saint Domingue (now known as Haiti), an uprising began which set forth events which were a major factor in the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade

**8.24—Independence Day;** Ukraine

Observes independence from the Soviet Union in 1991

**8.24—Janmashtami;** Hindu

A new moon festival celebrated with fasting in honor of the Hindu deity Lord Krishna

**8.24—Hero's Day;** Philippines

Celebrated on the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of August and commemorates the "Cry of Pugad Lawin" by Filipino revolutionaries called the Katipunan led by its leader Andres Bonifacio

**8.25—National Flag Day;** Liberia

Anniversary of the day the flag was first hoisted in 1847

**8.25—Independence Day;** Uruguay

Celebrates the declaration of independence from Brazil in 1825. Independence was attained in 1828

**8.25—Constitution Day;** Paraguay

Commemorates the revised constitution adopted on this day in 1967

**8.25—Table Communion pour Dan Wezo, Roi de France;** Haiti

**8.25—Dia do Soldado** (Soldier's Day); Brazil

Commemorates the efforts of members of the Brazilian Army. It is celebrated on the birthday of Luis Alves de Lima e Silva, the Duke of Caxias and the most important Brazilian military commander in history

**8.26—Heroes Day**; Namibia

Honors those who died for independence, especially during the Namibian War of Independence which began on this day in 1966

**8.26—Our Lady of Czestochowa**; Poland

**8.27—Independence Day**; Moldova

Celebrates the declaration of independence from the Soviet Union on this date in 1991. Independence was formally attained later that same year, with the dissolution of the Soviet Union on December 26

**8.27—Anniversary of the Women's Revolt**; Guinea

**8.28—Mariamoba** (Assumption); Georgia

Also known as The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and is celebrated with church ceremonies and feasts

**8.29—Nut Spas**; Russia

The last of the three harvest festivals to be celebrated in the month of August, the last month of the summer season when the harvest is sown. On this day nuts are gathered, blessed, and eaten

**8.29—Slovak National Uprising Day**; Slovakia

Marks the day in 1944 when the Slovak resistance movement organized an armed insurrection in an attempt to oust the government of Jozef Tiso

**8.30—Victory Day**; Turkey

Honors the warriors who died in the 1922 Battle of Dumlupinar, the final battle in the war of independence. The Mehtar band, the world's oldest military band, plays, and celebrations include military parades and fireworks

**8.30—Children's Day**; Afghanistan

**8.30—Feast of St. Rose of Lima**; St. Lucia

The feast day of Saint Rose, the first Catholic saint of the Americas, born in Lima, Peru and patroness of Lima

**8.30—Constitution Day**; East Timor

Commemorates the day in 1999 when a U.N.-supervised popular referendum was held and the majority voted for independence from Indonesia

**8.30—Constitution Day**; Kazakhstan

Celebrates the adoption of the constitution in 1995

**8.31- Independence Day**; Trinidad & Tobago

Celebrates the day in 1962 that Trinidad and Tobago became an independent nation within the British Commonwealth

**8.31—Merdeka** (Freedom) Day; Malaysia

Marks the independence of Malaya from British rule in 1957. The Federation of Malaysia was subsequently inaugurated in 1963, containing Malaya, North Borneo, Sarawak, and Singapore. Singapore later withdrew

**8.31—Solidarity Day**; Poland

Commemorates the formation, in 1980, of the first Polish labor union, Solidarnosc (Solidarity), at the Lenin Shipyards in Gdansk. Solidarity was granted legal status on April 17, 1989, clearing the way for the down fall of the Polish Communist Party

**8.31—Shab-e-Miraj**; Islamic (Muslim)

Commemorates the ascent of Muhammad, holy prophet of Islam, to heaven. Begins at sundown the previous day

**8.31—Independence Day**; Kyrgyzstan

Marks independence from Russia in 1991

**8.31—National Language Day** (Limba Noastra); Moldova

**8.31—White Rose Day**; Australia

A holiday in honor of Princess Diana and celebrated on the day of her death

**8.25—Liberation Day**; Hong Kong

Celebrated the last Monday in August to commemorate the end of Japanese occupation during World War II