



## *A sampling of cultural holidays observed around the world . . .*

**Junkanoo** ★ A Bahamian festival December 26 and January 1 where people wear masks and dance to music in the streets commemorating when slaves in the Bahamas were given freedom for 3 days around Christmas.

**Kwanzaa** ★ An African American holiday celebrated December 26 to January 1 that is focused on the seven principles of Unity, Faith, Creativity, Purpose, Cooperative Economies, Self-Determination, and Collective Work and Responsibility.

**Chanukkah** ★ The celebration of a revolution against assimilation and the suppression of Jewish religion. It is celebrated from December 15 to December 23.

**Advent** ★ Advent, the beginning of the Church Year for most churches in the Western tradition, begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas day, which is the Sunday nearest November 30, and ends on Christmas Eve (December 24).

**Three Kings Day** ★ A Christian holiday (January 6) in Mexico where children receive gifts instead of on Christmas day commemorating the Biblical story of the three kings who followed the star of Bethlehem to bring gifts to the Christ child.

**Eid-al-Adha** ★ A three day feast on the Muslim calendar beginning on January 10 that commemorates the willingness of Ibrahim to obey God by sacrificing his son Ishmael.

**Lunar New Year** ★ A holiday celebrated for two weeks by the Chinese, Koreans, and Vietnamese where people dress up in costumes and exchange food and gifts. It takes place during the first three days of the first lunar moon (late January or early February).

**Bodhi Day** ★ On December 8, Buddhists commemorate the Enlightenment (*bodhi*) of Shakyamuni Buddha.

**Japanese New Year** ★ Shogatsu is the celebration that take place on New Year's Day. People decorate their homes and give gifts of money and toys to children and greeting cards to family and friends.

**Las Posadas** ★ This holiday takes place December 16–24 in Mexico. It is a traditional Mexican festival which re-enacts Joseph's search for a room at the inn.

**World Religion Day** ★ This holiday, on January 15, is celebrated by those of the Baha'i religion. Its aim is to foster the establishment of interfaith understanding and harmony by emphasizing the common denominators underlying all religions.

**Hmong New Year** ★ is celebrated at the end of harvest season each year. The celebration can last 3 to 15 days depending on where it takes place. Young Hmong men and women dress up in traditional clothing to court each other. This is the only time that courtship and the display of the talents of ball tossing between a man and a woman is allowed.



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