

RELIGIOUS & CULTURAL EVENTS FOR 2020



Spiritual Health Association

JAN	5 January Birthday of Guru Gobind Singh Ji 10 th and final Guru of the Sikh. Sacrificed his life & family for human liberty, equality, and fraternity.	6 January Epiphany / Theophany Arrival of 3 wise men to baby Jesus. Also commemorates Jesus' baptism.	7 January Feast of the Nativity Eastern Orthodox Churches using the old Julian Calendar celebrate Christmas this day.	10 January Mahayana New Year	13 January Maghi Bravery of the 40 Immortal Ones' who protected Guru Gobind Singh for freedom of religious belief. These men were blessed with Mukti (Liberation or Salvation).	25 January Lunar New Year Year of the Rat	26 January Australia Day / Survival Day (public holiday)	31 January Birthdays of Guru Har Rai Sahib Ji The 7 th Guru's message is about the care of flora and fauna, animals and nature.	FEB	1-7 February UNITED NATIONS WORLD INTERFAITH HARMONY WEEK UN resolution for week of harmony between people regardless of their faith.	10 February Magha Puja Commemorates the Buddha's visit to the Veruvana Monastery.	13 February National Apology Day Recalling the Australian government's 2008 apology to The Aboriginal Stolen Generations.	15 Feb Nirvana Day Death and final enlightenment (Parinirvana) of the Buddha			
	21 February Maha Shivaratri Great festival of convergence of Shiva and Shakti. Also considered their wedding day.	26 February Ash Wednesday First day of Lent. 40 days of fasting and reflection leading up to Easter.	2 March Clean Monday Start of Orthodox Great Lent	21 March – 29 March CULTURAL DIVERSITY WEEK - 'Curiosity. Conversation. Community.'				22 March UN International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (Known in Australia as Harmony Day)		22 March Isra and Mi'raj Night journey to Jerusalem. Ascension of the Prophet Muhammad.	2 April Rama Navami Birthday of Lord Rama	5-12 April Palm Sunday The start of Holy Week	7-9 April Theravada New Year	9 April Lailat al Bara'ah Night of extra worship and forgiveness, followed by fasting the next day.	9-16 April Pesach (Passover) Deliverance from slavery, exodus from Egypt.	
APR	10 April Good Friday	12 April Easter Day	8 April Hanuman Jayanti Birthday of Lord Hanuman, the reincarnation of Lord Shiva in the form of a Ruda.	12 April Orthodox Palm Sunday	13 April Vaisakhi Creation of the Khalsa Panth (Sikh Nation, Brotherhood of the Pure) doming 5 articles of faith.	17 April Mahavir Jayanti Celebrates the birth of Saint Mahavir, founder of Jainism as a religion.	17 April Orthodox Good Friday	18 April Birthdays of Guru Angad Dev Sahib Ji & Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib Ji Celebrates the birthdays of the 2 nd and 9 th Guru.	19 April Orthodox Easter (Pascha)	20 April First Day of Ridvan Marking Baha'u'llah's declaration of His mission as a Messenger of God. The most important holy day and start of the twelve-day Festival of Ridvan.	21 April Yom Ha Shoah Remembering the Holocaust	24 April Ramadan Begins Holy month of fasting. Revelation of the Qur'an to Prophet Mohammed. Prayers, spiritual and physical cleansing.	25 April Anzac Day Remembering the sacrifice of those who died in war.	28 April Ninth Day of Ridvan	MAY	1 May Twelfth Day of Ridvan
	2 May Birthdays of Guru Arjun Dev Sahib Ji 5 th Guru. Built Harmandir Sahib and compiled the Sikh scriptures	6 May Narasimha Jayanti Lord Narasimha is a reincarnation of Lord Vishnu, who appeared in the form of half lion and half man, to kill demon Hiranyakashyapu.	7 May Buddha Day / Vesak Day (UN observance) Night of Destiny, the night when Angel Gabriel brought down the first verses of the Qur'an to Prophet Muhammad	19 May Laylat al Qadr Night of Destiny, the night when Angel Gabriel brought down the first verses of the Qur'an to Prophet Muhammad	23 May Declaration of the Bab Celebrates announcement of His Mission in 1844 by the Bab, Forerunner of Baha'u'llah.	23 May Birthdays of Guru Amar Das Sahib Ji Celebrates birthday of the 3 rd Guru. He rendered selfless service and took extensive steps to promote equality of women appointing them as missionaries.	24 May Eid al-Fitr End of Ramadan, celebrated with a festive meal, charity and good deeds.	26 May National Sorry Day Renewal of reconciliation efforts.	27 May – 3 June NATIONAL RECONCILIATION WEEK Anniversaries of 1967 Referendum (May 27 th , 1967) and landmark Mabo decision (3 rd June 1992)	28 May Ascension of Baha'u'llah Commemorates passing of Baha'u'llah, Prophet-Founder of the Baha'i Faith in 1892.	29-30 May Shavuot Combined harvest festival and celebration of the gift of the Torah.					
MAY	31 May Pentecost Descent of Holy Spirit on Jesus Christ's disciples.	5 June Saka Dawa Buddha's birth, enlightenment and death.	7 June Orthodox Pentecost Descent of Holy Spirit on Jesus Christ's disciples.	16 June Martyrdom of Sri Guru Arjun Dev Sahib Ji 5 th Guru of the Sikhs and 1 st Sikh martyr.	1 July Coming of the Light Recognising the adoption of Christianity through Torres Strait Islander communities during the late 19 th Century	5 July Dharma Day The Buddha's first Teaching	5 July – 12 July NAIDOC WEEK Celebrating history, culture, and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.	5 July Birthdays of Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji Birthdays of the 6 th Guru. Built Akal Takhat (the Immortal Throne), and proclaimed principles of spiritual and temple authority.	5 July Guru Purnima Full Moon Day. Birth anniversary of great sage Maharshi Vyasa, who edited and reconciled all the holy Vedic Scriptures.	9 July Martyrdom of the Bab Execution of the Bab in 1850	23 July Birthdays of Guru Har Krishen Sahib Ji Birthdays of the 8 th Guru. He became Guru at age 5. He stressed humility and wisdom and took care of the sick during smallpox epidemic in Delhi.	30 July Waqf al Arafah (Hajj) Season of pilgrimage to Mecca. Islamic observance day during Hajj when pilgrims pray for forgiveness and mercy.				
	31 July – 3 August Eid-al-Adha Four days of the Festival of Sacrifice as it commemorates Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son to God; he was replaced with a ram.	3 August Raksha Bandhan Full moon day. Symbolises the strong and healthy relationship between a brother and sister when he vows for her protection.	9 August International Day of the World's Indigenous People Recognises the first UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations meeting in Geneva in 1982 to promote and protect the rights of the world's indigenous peoples. Recognises the contributions that indigenous people make to improve world issues such as environmental protection.	11 August Krishna Janmashtami Birthdays of Lord Krishna, narrator of the "way of life" in Bhagavad Gita	15 August Assumption / Dormition of Mary Commemorates the death, burial, and ascension of the Virgin Mary	20 August Al Hijra (Islamic New Year) First day of Muharram, first month in the lunar Islamic calendar, marking Prophet Mohammed's move from Mecca to Medina.	22 August Ganesh Chaturthi 10-day festival of Lord Ganesh begins on this day.	26 August Radhashtami Birthdays of Goddess Radha, consort of Krishna	29 August Ashura Sunni Muslims: The day that Moses was saved from the Pharaoh's tyranny. Fasting recommended. Sh'a Muslims: The day that Husayn, grandson of Muhammad was martyred.	2 September "Hungry Ghost" Festival (Ullambana) Ancestor Day: Celebrate lives of ancestors with food offerings to relieve the sufferings of the ghosts while the spiritual gates are open.	29 September Vishwakarma Puja Creator of the universe and the architect of all Gods	19 – 20 September Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year) Celebrates the birth of the world marked by the sound of the Shofar (ramshorn), prayer, and 10 days of repentance.				
JULY	28 September Yom Kippur Day of Atonement. The holiest day of the Jewish calendar; Yom Kippur consists of a 25-hour fast while praying with the themes of atonement and repentance.	1 October Kathina / Sangha Day (Theravada Buddhist)	3-9 October Sukkot Feast of Tabernacles: Fall harvest and commemorates 40 years in the desert. Last day is an opportunity to give thanks to ancestors, and final chance to atone for sins committed in the last year.	9 October Birthdays of Guru Ram Das Sahib Ji 4 th Guru, who founded the City of Amritsar and started the construction of the Pool in which stands the Golden Temple.	11 October Simchat Torah Joyful holiday celebrating the completion of annual cycle of weekly Torah readings.	17-26 October Navaratri Birth of the Bab Prophet-Herald of the Baha'i Faith, 1839	19-20 October Twin Holy Birthdays Birth of Baha'u'llah Prophet-Founder of the Baha'i Faith, 1817	20 October Conferral of Guruship to Guru Granth Sahib Ji Guru Gobind Singh Ji, the 10 th Sikh Guru took an extraordinary step in ordaining Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji the Sikh Holy Scripture as the Eternal Guru of the Sikhs. The line of person Gurus came to an end and the Shabad ("Word") became the Guru.	25 October Dussehra / Vijaya Dashami One of the most auspicious days. King Ravana was killed in the great war by Lord Rama on this day.	25-31 October INTERNATIONAL SPIRITUAL CARE WEEK 2020 THEME: "Collaborative Healthcare - Chaplains complete the picture"	29 October Mawlid an-Nabi Prophet Mohammed's Birthday.	NOV	1 November All Saints Day Honouring saints known and unknown, who led lives of holiness and devotion to God.			
	11 November Remembrance Day One-minute silence and services held in memory of those who have served and died in all wars.	14 November Diwali / Deepavali / Bandi Chhor Divali Festival of lights over 5 days, celebrating victory of light over darkness. Sikhs celebrate Guru Hargobind Sahib's release from prison. He also secured the release of 52 Hindu kings. Others before self.	24 November Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib Ji Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur who stood for the freedom to worship for all religions, against Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb.	25 November Day of the Covenant Baha'u'llah's appointment of his son, 'Abdu'l-Baha, as the Centre of His Faith.	27 November Ascension of 'Abdu'l-Baha Passing of 'Abdu'l-Baha, son of Baha'u'llah in 1921.	29 Nov – 24 Dec Advent Reflection, repentance, and belief in Jesus Christ.	30 November Guru Nanak Dev Sahib Ji Birth of Guru Nanak (1469-1539), founder of Sikhism.	8 December Bodhi Day Day the historical Buddha attained "awakening" or "enlightenment" known as "Bodhi."	10 December Human Rights Day (UN Observance) The date was chosen to honour the United Nations General Assembly's adoption and proclamation (1948) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).	11-18 December Chanukah (Hanukkah) Celebrates recapture and rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem in the time of the Greeks.	25 December Christmas Day Celebrates the birth of Jesus, holiness through prayer and carols, themes of peace and goodwill, and sharing of gifts.					
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Spiritual Health Association acknowledges that this calendar was put together on the lands of the Wurundjeri and Bunwurrong people of the Kulin Nation.

We honour all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ancestors and Elders past, present and emerging.

Please note Jewish festivals begin at sundown on the previous stated day and, except for Yom Kippur, are celebrated for 2 days.

Islamic, Buddhist & Sikh festival dates are estimated and may vary depending on sighting of the lunar crescent/moon and are sometimes decided during the year.

Only major religious and cultural dates are included in this calendar. There may be others of importance to individuals of particular faiths or communities.

It is recommended that personal explanations and memories of traditions are sought and shared.