

# NEW YEAR'S CELEBRATIONS

## NEW YEAR'S DAY TRADITIONS

People celebrate the New Year by gathering with family and friends on New Year's Eve. Many people make New Year's resolutions – promises to improve themselves in the coming year. At midnight on New Year's Eve, some people sing "Auld Lang Sine," a traditional Scottish song about good will and letting go of the past. In Japan, people prepare for the new year by cleaning their houses to sweep away the past. Families and friends gather on New Year's Eve, and some people visit Buddhist or Shinto temples early the following morning.

## New Year's Day JANUARY 1ST

New Year's Day marks the beginning of the New Year according to the Gregorian calendar. January 1st is also a very important holiday in Japan, where the New Year is celebrated from January 1st to 3rd.



## CHINESE & KOREAN NEW YEAR TRADITIONS

In order to prepare for the New Year in China, it is important to clean away mistakes from the old year. In Korea, children wear new clothes at this time and bow to their elders and ancestors. Families in China and Korea travel long distances to celebrate together. Families and friends gather to eat together, and children receive lucky money, candy and fruit from their elders.

## Chinese New Year & Korean New Year JANUARY OR FEBRUARY

This holiday celebrates the start of the New Year according to the lunar calendar. The Chinese Zodiac is a 12-year cycle in which each year is named for a different animal. Predictions are made about a person's character based on the animal of the year in which he or she was born. These predictions are considered fun and entertaining by some people and are taken very seriously by others.



## Norooz

ON OR ABOUT MARCH  
21ST (LASTS FOR 13 DAYS)

In harmony with the rebirth of nature, the Persian New Year Celebration, or Norooz, always begins on the first day of spring, March 21st of each year. Norooz ceremonies are symbolic representations of two ancient concepts - the End and Rebirth. Norooz in Persian means "New Day".

## NOROOZ TRADITIONS

To prepare for the New Year, people clean their homes, bake pastries, and make or buy new clothes. On the last Wednesday before Norooz, Iranians leap over fires to gain strength, health and good luck for the coming year. During this festival, people set a Haft-Seen table containing seven dishes each beginning with an s sound in Farsi. Dishes include sprouts representing re-birth, an apple representing health and beauty, and garlic representing medicine.



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## NEW YEAR'S CELEBRATION SOURCES

Breilly, Elizabeth, Joanne O'Brien and Martin Palmer. *Festivals of the World: The Illustrated Guide to Celebrations, Customs, Events, and Holidays*. New York: Checkmark Books, 2002.

Norooz: [www.norooz.ca](http://www.norooz.ca)