



MULTICULTURAL AND DIVERSITY NEWSLETTER



Buddhist

DEC 8- BODHI DAY

In Japanese Zen, Bodhi Day is called "Rohatsu" and is the observance of enlightenment of the historical Buddha. Zen monasteries observe this day with a meditation retreat lasting several days. On the last night of a Rohatsu sesshin, monks and students often sit in meditation until dawn, as the Buddha did 25 centuries ago.

DEC 12- OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

It is an important religious festival in Mexico. It commemorates the appearance of the Blessed Virgin to an Indian Boy in 1531. Processions, dances, and visits are led to her Mexico City Shrine.



Mexico



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Jewish

DEC 19-26-HANUKKAH

It begins previous sundown at 6pm. The Festival of Lights is celebrated for 8 days. Approximately in 164 B.C., Maccabees, a small group of Jews fighting for religious freedom won victory over the Syrians. The legend goes that to rededicate the Temple, they found only one jar of holy oil and miraculously the candelabra remained lit for 8 days. An eight candle menorah is lit.

DEC 25-CHRISTMAS DAY

This day celebrates Jesus Christ's birth over 2000 years ago. Customs include lighting candles, exchanging gifts and using evergreen decorations to celebrate this day, the most widely observed Christian festival of the year. In most communities, it is a family day.



Christian



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*African-American/
Canadian,
USA*

DEC 26-JAN 1- KWANZAA

A professor who wanted to encourage African Americans to celebrate their heritage started Kwanzaa's in California in 1996. Kwanzaa means first fruit in Swahili and is a harvest festival. Families exchange gifts and have African-style feasts. Seven-pronged candleholders are lit on each consecutive night for the seven principles: unity, self-determination, working together, sharing, purpose, creativity, and faith.

DEC 31- OMISOKA

To usher in the New Year, families clean their homes, eat toshi-koshi buckwheat noodles in the hope that one's life will be stretched out as long as these noodles. As midnight approaches, Shinto temples around the country begin ringing out the old year, sounding the temple bell 108 times, signifying the 108 human worldly desires removed by the striking of the bell.



Japan

Reference

Khanna, A., Mody, P., Powers, S., Raza. R. (2022).
Multicultural Calendar 2022. Toronto: O