

Holiday Time: Favorite Holidays, Family, Fun and Food



Christmas and New Year's Eve in Mexico

by Natalia Moriel

My favorite holiday is Christmas and New Year's Evening because it's when I have the chance to see most of my family and close friends. My grandma and I usually cook the dinner for everybody. We normally cook one turkey, shrimp spaghetti, mashed potatoes with bacon and cheese or with gravy. Grandma likes to make a dessert with whipped cream, marshmallows and fruit, which is delicious. During Dec. 24, my mom is checking if everybody has a present under the tree or if grandma or I need something for dinner, and if we do, she runs to get it. Grandpa, as always, is watching TV or working on his laptop playing games or reading the news, chatting with our family in the U.S., and once an hour asking if the food is almost done.

When dinner is finally done, I get ready with my mom. My sister and my niece. My mom and my sister usually want me to do their eye make-up, and sometimes grandma, too. In my family, we don't usually play after dinner, but I have gone to friends' houses where they play games until midnight and then open the gifts. In my family it's different, maybe because my grandparents go to sleep early.

When we eat, we all talk about our other family who couldn't come, tell jokes, laugh, and finish when the last one is finished eating. Then we go to the living room where the tree with all the presents is and start the gift by opening our presents. My grandpa takes pictures of everybody with their gifts. Finally, we clean up a little after Grandpa goes to bed and, if some of our friends have invited us to their home, we go. If not, we go to bed, too. On New Year's Eve, we cook jam, but every year the rest of the food is different. We eat, we stay up till midnight, and then we all hug. Also we take pictures, break a piñata, eat candy and fight over the Bengal lights, all outside. Sometimes, if we do this before midnight, I go to a dance club for New Year's Eve.

Friday Is a Special Day in Libya...by Abdolmola Elmograbi

Because I am from a very ordinary family, my favorite holiday is Friday. Why? Because in our country and in our religion that is the day to pray and to meet with all the family at home. It is also very important time to be with your mother and father. On Friday, my mother cooks and helps the boys only. At the same time, the wives and sisters are baking sweets. After my mother prepares the food, usually couscous or bazeen which are traditional Libyan foods, she prepares green and red tea because my father likes green tea and she likes red tea.

Also, Fridays are important because children are with their grandfather. On that day my father is always ready to distribute candy to the children. After eating and drinking tea, we sit and listen to my father and his advice for each of us and what he wants us to do during this holiday.

Sometimes, especially in nice weather we all go to the seashore to rent a suitable place or raise a large tent. We enjoy the activities in the sea especially swimming that is good for the exercise children. They like to play with the ball and run down the beach. My mother enjoys being at the beach so she does not stay home alone and clean by herself and my father never helps her, but rather goes to sleep under the pretext that he is sick.



A Special Holiday Marks End of Month of Fasting

by Norah AlRubiah, Saudi Arabia

Each one in the world has a favorite holiday with many good memories. I have a special holiday that I cannot forget because it means a lot to me. That holiday is Eid al-Fitr in July every year. Always my feelings are happy on this holiday because I have many things to do such as visit my relatives with my family to congratulate them on the occasion of Eid al-Fitr, and welcome people to our home to congratulate us. Also, my friends and I hang out to celebrate together and play with fireworks. Before the Eid Al-Fitr holiday, all people in my country go shopping to buy new clothes to wear on this day. I enjoy going shopping with my friends for many hours. In addition, the elders in my family, such as my father, mother, and grandparents give me and my brothers mon, which is called an Eid al-Fitr bonus and that simply makes us happy. In some Eid al-Fitr holidays, my family and I travel somewhere to celebrate together. In 2012 we traveled to Dubai one day before Eid al-Fir. We spent a beautiful week there, and I saw my best friend, which made me so glad.

In 2013 Eid al-Fitr was on my wedding day. I spent it with my husband in Malaysia. We enjoyed our honeymoon, but I was sad because it was the first Eid al-Fitr away from my family. From that year until now, I have spent Eid al-Fitr in the US with my husband and my friends, but without my family. My husband and I will travel soon to our country, and I will be happy to be near to my family for the next Eid al-Fitr. Finally, I hope I can spend all the Eid al-Fitr holidays with my parents and my lovely brothers.

Mid-Autumn Festival Is Favorite Chinese Holiday

by Ban Yin

China is an old country which has a variety of holidays. They all came from different myths story; history events; and folk legends. My favorite holiday is Mid-Autumn Festival, one of the biggest and most significant holidays to Chinese. We can say Mid-autumn is a Chinese Thanksgiving. It is the day for family reunions.

The one reason I like this holiday is because of its beautiful legend. The story goes like this: Once upon a time, there was a couple, Houyi and Chang'e, they were living in happiness and peace... However, one day, there were ten suns that emerged in the sky. Houyi was an outstanding hunter and leader of the tribe. He shot nine suns and saved the people. When everybody was celebrating their survival and thanks to Houyi that night, there was a villain who coveted his beautiful wife, Chang'e, and wanted to humiliate her. Or protect her chastity, Chang'e took an elixir from her godmother and flew to the moon. Houyi missed Chang'e very much. After that; he did a sacrifice for Chang'e every year at the Mid-autumn day, and it continues until today.

Nowadays, this festival has become a family reunion because the full moon means everything is satisfactory. Every family will come together wherever they live. People will eat traditional food, such as moon cakes, make different shaped fruit carvings, like watermelon baskets, and enjoy the glorious full moon with a formal family dinner. In my family, we also like to sing and dance together because my family has an artistic talent gene...

Another reason the Mid-Autumn Festival is my favorite is the season. Autumn is the best season in the year because it is harvest time; at the same time, it is not too hot or extremely cold. I enjoy the cool temperature of the mid-autumn and diverse foods on the table. Furthermore, the quiet and beautiful night with the brightest full moon is just like a poem with Chinese monochromes.

I like the Mid-Autumn Festival not only because of the beautiful legend, but also because it is a reuniting time of the family. It is a romantic and cozy holiday.

Eid Is Muslim Holiday with a Purpose...by Majid AlMarzuqi, Saudi Arabia

The most delightful holiday is the holiday that gathers fun and joyful time among our families. Eid Al-Fitr is one of my best holidays. This holiday is a celebration of accomplishing a whole month of fasting from sunrise to sunset. Eid Al-Fitr is a distinguishing holiday because it is not just about commercializing as are the other holidays. it shows that a person can live without her or his daily needs.

Fasting for a whole month lets the person waive some of the materialism and desirable things. Waiving things is an authentic challenge for all human beings. Muslims do that to please God, so that they can leave behind material things to focus on just worshipping Him. The reason for that is because God wants to explain the real goal of life, so we have to please Him and to do justice to all people. Eid Al-Fitr has simplified many things that have value. For instance, rich people and poor people celebrate the same thing in the same way. Whether the person is rich or poor does not matter; what really matters is to draw a smile by visiting the whole district to show the relevance between people. The main purpose of this holiday is to see how simple life is and whether rich or poor what really matters is the relationship between God and His people and to treat people in a kind and simple way.

Thanksgiving, My Favorite American Holiday...by Yun Zuo, China

Thanksgiving was a holiday that I was looking forward to. I think it is a very meaningful holiday and it is also one of the most important holidays I America.

First, my host mother and I went to church which was really beautiful and the people all enjoyed things, such as singing songs and reading the Holy Bible. People blessed each other, too. Then we went to attend a Thanksgiving party. Our family prayed before we started the meal. The turkey was very big and delicious, and I was excited to experience Thanksgiving because I never attended a party like this in China.

That day I felt so happy. We should give thanks for everything. It left me with a good memory, and I sent some pictures to my parents. In conclusion, I wanted to say thanks to my host mother, Julie.

Spring Views is published at the end of each nine-week term to encourage students in all levels to share their writing with a larger audience. Connie Shoemaker, editor

